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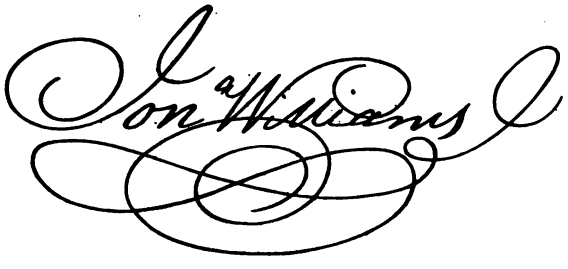
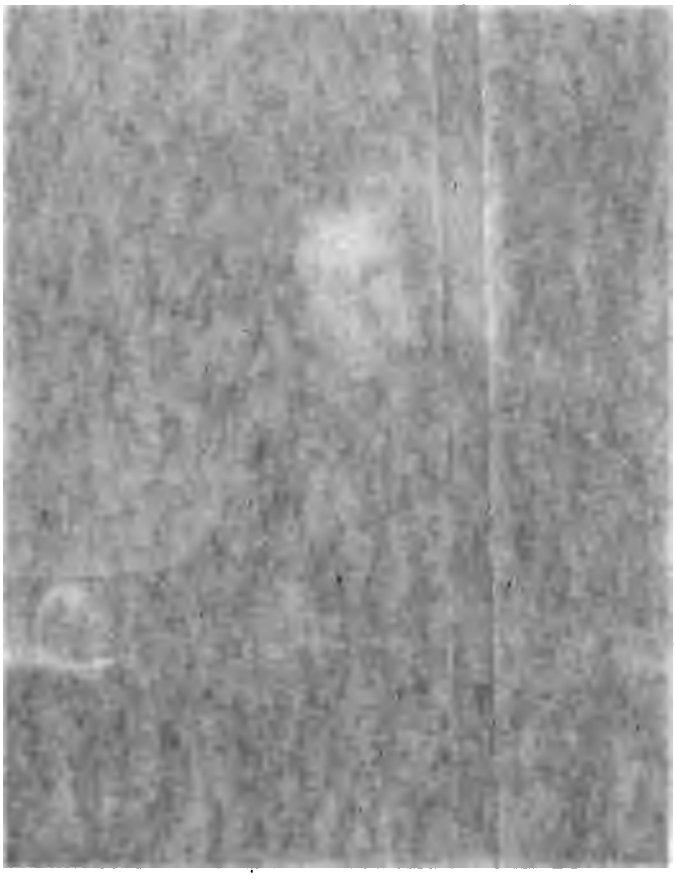
JONATHAN BROWN BRIGHT

of Waltham, Mass., with one half the income of this Legacy. Such descendants failing, other persons are eligible to the scholarships. The will requires that this announcement shall be made in every book added to the Library under its provisions.

Engraved by R.W.Dodson from a Painting by T. Sully

GENERAL JONATHAN WILLIAMS.





CAMPAIGNS

OF THE

WAR OF 1812-15,

AGAINST

GREAT BRITAIN,

SKETCHED AND CRITICISED;

WITH

Brief Biographies

OF THE

AMERICAN ENGINEERS,

BY

BVT. MAJOR-GENERAL GEORGE W. CULLUM,

COLONEL, CORPS OF ENGINEERS, U. S. ARMY—RETIRED.

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PREFACE.

THIS WORK does not profess to give a minute History of the War of 1812–15, by the United States against Great Britain; but the sketches of the Campaigns are sufficiently detailed for an intelligent understanding of their military features, and to indicate their tactical and strategical errors. Each Campaign is illustrated with a good skeleton Map of its Theatre of Operations and with outline Plans of its principal Battles, Sieges, etc.; for most of which I am deeply indebted to the Messrs Harpers Brothers, who courteously permitted me to copy them from the "Pictorial Field Book of the War of 1812, by Benjamin J. Lossing"—the distinguished author of so many valuable histories.

The Biographical Sketches of our American Engineers, interwoven with the narrations of the campaigns of this war, are of men who, in character, intelligence and love of country, were the worthy successors of our patriot soldiers of the Revolution. For most of the materials with which to write the sketch, in Chapter I., of GENERAL JONATHAN WILLIAMS, I am greatly indebted to his son, lately deceased, under whose hospitable roof, at Chestnut Hill,

near Philadelphia, I had placed at my disposal all of his father's well preserved public and private papers. For the preparation of the sketch, in Chapter II., I had great advantages, having, after being graduated at the Military Academy, served my professional apprenticeship under GENERAL TOTTEN, and continued subject to his orders, as Chief Engineer of the Army, till his death in 1864. After vexatious delays and much tedious correspondence in search of data for writing the sketch, in Chapter III., of LIEUT.-COLONEL WOOD, I fortunately discovered, at last, the residence of the survivors of his brothers' families, who have been untiring in hunting up a few precious papers from which I have prepared an account of this knightly soldier. For sketching GENERAL SWIFT'S biography, in Chapter IV., I had every desirable facility, his brother, formerly a prominent officer of Topographical Engineers, having given me free access to the General's diary and his many valuable papers. The preparation of the sketch, in Chapter V., of COLONEL MCREE, was a very difficult task, as he wrote little, and I had, therefore, mainly to rely upon my recollection of conversations with officers who had served with him on the Niagara and elsewhere. MAJOR DOUGLASS, the subject of Chapter VI., I personally knew and had all his professional papers placed at my disposal through the courtesy of his worthy son—Rev. Mal-

colm Douglass, D.D. For the short sketch of GENERAL ARMISTEAD, in Chapter VII. my materials were very meagre. Of MAJOR LATOUR, whose biography is briefly sketched in Chapter VIII., I extremely regret I could learn but little, though every avenue of information was thoroughly explored, in which I had the most efficient assistance of my friend, Colonel Edward A. Palfrey, of New Orleans. The sketches, in Chapter IX., are of ENGINEERS, with some of whom I enjoyed years of personal intimacy.

As a fitting appendix to my work, I have given in Chapter X., the graphic JOURNAL OF LIEUT.-COLONEL WOOD, while Chief Engineer of Major-General Harrison, in his Northwestern Campaigns of 1812–13. This Journal, often quoted from by historians of the War of 1812–15, never before has been published. Through the great kindness of the Colonel's niece, Mrs. D. G. Dodge of Rouse's Point, N. Y., I procured the original manuscript, with the exception of a few missing pages, and to prevent further loss of any part of this valuable document, I obtained her consent to its appearance in this work.

These ten chapters make up a volume, which I trust will prove worthy of the perusal of historical students.

G. W. C.

315 FIFTH AVENUE,
NEW YORK CITY, JUNE 17, 1879.

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CHAPTER FIRST.

MILITARY EDUCATION AND CAUSES OF THE WAR; WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF BRIG.-GENERAL JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

EXPERIENCE in the first campaigns of the War of the Revolution strongly impressed on the mind of Washington the absolute necessity of a systematic army organization. His chief difficulty in carrying out such a plan was to obtain properly instructed engineers which, except the few who had seen service at Louisburg, Crown Point, Ticonderoga and Quebec, were not to be found in the country; hence common surveyors, men with a modicum of scientific knowledge, and adventurers professing to have been educated in foreign military schools, were often commissioned with high rank in the Continental Army. Washington's correspondence is filled with complaints of the imperfect qualifications and the paucity of engineers in the army. To Congress, July 10, 1775, he writes of his lack of engineers to direct the defenses of Boston, "the skill of those we have being very imperfect"; to Governor Trumbull, Nov. 2, 1775, he says: "I sincerely wish this camp could furnish a good engineer"; and to the Committee of Safety of Pennsylvania, June 17, 1776, which had applied to

him for an engineer to erect a redoubt at Billingsport, he replies: "I have but one on whose judgment I should wish to depend in laying out any work of the least consequence. Congress well know my wants in this instance and several of my late letters to them have pressed the appointment of gentlemen qualified for the business." Congress authorized a Corps of Engineers, Dec. 27, 1776, but most of those employed proving to be incompetent charlatans, Congress at last, through our Commissioners at Paris—Dr. Franklin and Silas Deane—was compelled to ask Louis XVI. for engineers; for, said the sarcastic General Charles Lee, "we had not an officer who knew the difference between a *chevaux-de-frise* and a cabbage garden." From this time till the end of the Revolution we probably had in service some thirty engineer officers, mostly foreigners, exclusive of those attached to the three companies of engineer troops—all of whom, on the conclusion of peace, were disbanded.

From the termination of the War of Independence, in 1783, to the end of his life, Washington urged upon his country the importance of military instruction. Before the Continental Army was disbanded, he called upon his general officers, April 14, 1783, to present their views with reference to a peace establishment, to enable him to prepare his elaborate report to Congress, in which military education was strongly recommended. No such provision having been made, Washington, in his speech to Congress, December 3, 1793, asks whether, in the act more effectually to provide for the national defense, "a

material feature in our improvement of it ought not to be to afford an opportunity for the study of those branches of the military art which can scarcely ever be attained by practice alone." On this recommendation, Congress in 1794 created the subaltern grade of Cadet, the cadets being attached to their regiments and "furnished at the public expense with the necessary books, instruments and apparatus" for their instruction; but this plan of educating young officers at their posts was found impracticable; hence Washington, in his last annual message, December 7, 1796, again urged in the most cogent language the establishment of a Military Academy, where a regular course of instruction in the science of war could be given. "Whatever argument," says he, "may be drawn from particular examples, superficially viewed, a thorough examination of the subject will evince that the art of war is at once comprehensive and complicated; that it demands much previous study; and the possession of it, in its most improved and perfect state, is always of great moment to the security of a nation. This, therefore, ought to be a serious care of every government." After leaving the executive chair, he writes, December 13, 1798, to the Secretary of War upon the importance of having good engineers and artillerists, and the impossibility of forming them suddenly, when "much previous study and experience are essential." Again, May 13, 1799, he writes to him earnestly upon the necessity of having instructed engineers; and finally, two days before his death, December 12, 1799, in his last public letter, he says to General Alexander Hamilton:

"The establishment of a Military Academy upon a respectable and extensive basis has ever been considered by me as an object of primary importance to this country; and while I was in the chair of government, I omitted no proper opportunity of recommending it in my public speeches, and otherwise to the attention of the legislature."

At last his earnest efforts and those of the patriot statesmen and generals of the Revolution, secured the establishment, March 16, 1802, of the Military Academy at West Point, then a school for ten Cadets of Engineers and forty of Artillery; and now a world renowned institution, educating over three hundred pupils for all branches of service in the Army.

General Jonathan Williams, the first Superintendent of the Military Academy, is so identified with its early struggles, and by his noble character so fashioned the future of his pupils, particularly those of his own corps—our American Engineers, who participated in the War of 1812–15, against Great Britain—that we must enter somewhat into the details of his biography, though, for reasons which will appear, he took no active part in our second struggle for Independence.

Jonathan Williams was born, May 26, 1750, in Boston, Mass. His father, of the same name, was a much respected merchant largely engaged in the West India trade; was a staunch Whig and among the foremost patriots who took part in the struggle of the Colonists against the mother country; was moderator, in 1773, of the memorable meetings at

Faneuil Hall to forbid the landing of the tea, subsequently thrown into the harbor; and in 1775, became a fugitive from Boston, then occupied by British troops who burned his store and seized all his property. His mother, Grace Williams (*née* Harris), a lady of good abilities and cultivated tastes, was the niece of the celebrated Dr. Benjamin Franklin.

Young Williams received a good English education, but before it was completed he was placed in his father's counting house to be brought up as a merchant. He was an intelligent and studious boy, devoting all his leisure to the acquirement of knowledge, thus obtaining a considerable proficiency in the classics and a ready and familiar acquaintance with the French language without even a master, his father refusing him one because of his dislike to French principles. Williams' letters from the West Indies and many parts of Europe where he traveled, display his maturity of judgment, excellent business faculties, and clear conceptions of men and things.

He went to England in 1770, taking up his residence with his grand-uncle, Dr. Franklin, to whom he made himself very useful by putting his accounts in complete order—a labor so highly appreciated by Franklin that he presented to Williams a handsome gold watch, upon receiving which he remarked that he would much prefer the Doctor's old one, which was given to him and is now a family heirloom. Ever after he was a great favorite of his grand-uncle.

He returned to Boston, in 1771, where he was engaged for three years in mercantile pursuits. Just after the famous Boston "tea-party" of Dec. 16,

1773, he again went to England, and probably carried abroad the first account of this bold proceeding, as will appear from the following letter to his father: "After seeing my merchants, I went to see the Doctor (Franklin) whom I found in exceeding good health and spirits, and was welcomed by him with a degree of joy and affection which surpassed even the expectations I had formed from the former proofs I received of extensive goodness and friendship. I waited again on my uncle, but he was not at home; went then to Lord Dartmouth's (Colonial Secretary) at whose levee I met my uncle. After sending my name and business, I was immediately admitted to his lordship, who received me with great politeness. When he had read the letters he asked me many questions, which I answered as well as I was able. I told him of the opinion of the people, their firmness, their determination, and their intention of a junction of the colonies, which I delivered perhaps not in polite, but in American language. I left out nothing which I thought would give his lordship a true idea of the importance and virtue of the Americans, and having the strictest truth for my guide, I was not in the least confused nor abashed, but spoke as I would to any other man. He heard me with great politeness and although I frequently discovered a sense of the impropriety of the administration, he seemed pleased. He then asked me my private opinion. 'Mr. Williams,' said he, 'I wish to come at truth, and as a man alone, shall be glad of your sentiments with regard to the disposition of the Americans. I ask it as a private gentleman; this

conversation is confidential, and you may depend I shall make no public use of what you tell me.' I made some little apology for my inferiority in point of abilities, but said, that as he had assured me we were private gentlemen, I would relate to him all I knew; but being unused to elegant addresses, I should presume on his indulgence, and deliver my sentiments in my own unadorned way, and endeavor to utter simple truths, without confounding the matter by seeking to establish the manner. I then told him that the Americans never would submit; that they would not be surprised when the other acts should arrive; that they expected the worst, and were accordingly prepared; that I believed the junction would take place; and that they thought now or never was the time; that they supposed by submission they would make themselves the most abject slaves on earth; and that by opposition they could not be worse; that Parliament had no right to tax them; and that they would die by this opinion; and that a universal non-exportation would be attended with salutary effects. His lordship, after some time, asked me if I knew 'Mr. Williams who appeared as moderator of that assembly (the meeting at Faneuil Hall).' He is my father, my lord. 'And is your father a principal in these disturbances? Mr. Williams, how comes that, sir?' My father, my lord, is an honest man, and one who seeks not fame. He was in that meeting as any other man might be, and when chosen was much surprised; he expressed himself as being unacquainted with the office; and on the motion being put, and passed in the negative,

he therefore officiated. My father, my lord, has been so little, heretofore, engaged in political disputes, that I was as much surprised as I should be had your lordship been in the desk. But, my lord, I am only relating facts; it is not for me to dispute on the merit or demerit of my father's conduct, but I am sure he acted according to the dictates of his conscience and upon honest principles; and thus acting I hope your lordship will not think him wrong, though you may not agree in sentiment. He smiled, and after paying me a compliment for my plainness and freedom, said laughingly, so, then, your father may say with Falstaff: 'Some men are in pursuit of honor, but others have honors in pursuit of them.'"

He writes again, in September, 1774, that he anticipated warm work in Parliament, and that greater opposition than is expected would be encountered in the ministry; but that our unanimity and firmness must eventually gain the point.

After a short visit to France, he writes, May 15, 1775, from London almost prophetically. He says: "I have passed two months in the most agreeable manner possible, except with regard to my reflections relative to my unhappy country, which always attend me wherever I go * * * The French are all in our favor. They suppose England to have arrived at its pinnacle of glory, and that the Empire of America will rise on the ruins of this Kingdom; and I really believe that when we shall be involved in civil war, they will gladly embrace the first opportunity of renewing their attacks on an old enemy,

who they imagine will be so weakened by its internal broils, as to become an easy conquest. Although I profess myself an American, I am still an Englishman; I only wish the titles to be synonymous;* and therefore do not hope for the destruction of this country; I only wish the prosperity of my own; and that its rights and privileges may ever remain inviolate, to secure which no sacrifice should be thought too dear; so I do not give the French so much credit for their partiality, for I believe it to proceed in general more from a hatred to England, than a love to us; though in some particulars, I believe the natural rights of humanity are the basis of their opinions."

Full of youthful hope that our differences with the mother country would yet be reconciled, he had nearly completed a mercantile connection with a large English house extensively engaged in the West India trade, when the inevitable separation of the two countries decided him to quit England and reside in France. Writing from Nantes, Feb. 11, 1777, he says: "When I wrote to you from England I was in the expectation of taking up my residence in that country. The scene is now changed; and since it becomes a question which of the two countries I would prefer in a separate state, I did not hesitate to quit all my lucrative views, and to come hither, to do all the service I can, without expectation of further emolument than a subsistence. It is not improbable that I shall engage in the American

* See "Sabine's Loyalists in America" for the sentiments at this time of Adams, and other distinguished Americans with regard to England.

trade in some part of France, or return to some part of America, charged with the management of commercial matters. Whatever I do in this way will be upon a large scale, and whilst I am doing essential service to my country, I may advance my own fortune. In this, however, I make a distinction; whatever I am capable of doing for the benefit of the cause, I will undertake, with pleasure, gratis; but otherwise, in all commercial engagements with individuals of another nation."

These letters, of which there are many others, be it remembered, were the effusions of a young man of twenty-six, yet how simply and forcibly expressed; what an exhibition of self-reliance and conscious rectitude; how full of patriotic fire and indignation against wrong; what perception of the springs of human action and knowledge of their effects; and, grasping the significance of passing events, how prophetic of the future! His letters to Dr. Franklin, then in America, and to Robert Morris, one of his cherished correspondents, breathe a like love of country, and display a large insight into men and nations.

As a commercial agent of the United States at Nantes, though separated from the land he loved, and deeply interested in her struggle for independence, he performed, with honorable fidelity, his promise of gratuitously doing all in his power for the freedom of America.

He married, Sept. 12, 1779, Mariamne Alexander, daughter of William Alexander of Edinburg, in Scotland, a connection of Lord Stirling. The cere-

mony took place in Paris, in the chapel of the Dutch Ambassador, Dr. Franklin being present.

He was appointed, in 1783, by the Farmers-General of France, as their agent to supply them with tobacco, then and now a government monopoly, which took him to St. Germain-en-Laye. After two years he returned to America with Dr. Franklin, taking up his residence in Philadelphia.

During the next three years he remained in the United States, engaged in settling and arranging his affairs which had become involved in consequence of the war, the depreciation of the currency, and the difficulty of collecting debts. During this period of comparative leisure he devoted himself to scientific pursuits, for which he had a great fondness; attended several courses of Medical lectures; published numerous philosophical papers; received, July 18, 1787, from Harvard University the degree of A. M.; and, July 20, 1788, became Member and Secretary of the American Philosophical Society, to whose transactions he contributed numerous papers.

He went to England, Nov. 30, 1789, for the last time to bring back his family to Philadelphia, which he selected as his future home to enable him to be near his earliest, kindest and dearest friend—Dr. Franklin; but on his return in August, 1790, he received the melancholy tidings that the great philosopher and eminent statesman was no more.

At "Mount Pleasant," his beautiful country seat on the banks of the Schuylkill, near Philadelphia (now within the Fairmount Park), surrounded by his interesting family and enjoying the respect of a

large social circle, he devoted his time to the duties of a useful citizen and the pursuit of congenial studies—Mathematics, Philosophy, Medicine, Botany and even Law; acquiring enough of the latter to subsequently become a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia.

In his various voyages he had noticed that the thermometer fell when the vessel approached soundings, either over a bank or on the coast. It occurred to him that this would be a certain protection at the trifling expense of a nautical thermometer. After repeating his experiments many times, he was satisfied that the temperature of the sea over banks was colder than the main ocean in the inverse ratio to the depth. The importance of this discovery he set forth before the American Philosophical Society, Nov. 19, 1790, subsequently publishing his paper in a small volume, entitled "Thermometrical Navigation."

He accompanied, in 1794, the forces to quell the western insurrection in Pennsylvania; and, under the act of Feb. 23, 1795, he held provisionally, from April 28 to May 23, 1800, the position of Purveyor of Public Supplies, whose duty, under the direction and supervision of the Secretary of the Treasury, was "to conduct the procuring and providing of all arms, military and naval stores, provisions, clothing, Indian goods, and, generally, all articles of supply requisite for the service of the United States."

President Adams appointed Williams, Feb. 16, 1801, a Major in the Second Regiment of Artillerists and Engineers, and on Dec. 14th following, President Jefferson, under the act of March 3, 1799, commis-

sioned him Inspector of Fortifications. In the summer of 1801, Williams made a tour of inspection along the Ohio River from Pittsburg to Cantonment Massac (eleven miles below the mouth of the Tennessee); and, as ordered while making this tour of inspection, went to West Point and assumed command, Dec. 15, 1801, of the embryo Military School which preceded the present Military Academy.

Mr. Jefferson (with John Adams and Benjamin Franklin) one of the U. S. Commissioners to negogiate commercial treaties with European nations, was introduced at Paris, in 1784, to Williams, then an agent of the Farmers-General of France at St. Germain-en-Laye. This acquaintance ripened into mutual appreciation and esteem, and a consequence was, that when Jefferson became President of the United States, he transferred, April 1, 1802, Major Williams to the head of the Corps of Engineers created by the recent law of March 16, 1802, in which it was provided that the Principal Engineer should have the Superintendence of the Military Academy. On the 8th July, following, he was promoted to be Lieut.-Colonel.

It was truly fortunate for the Military Academy that its first Superintendent was such a man as Major Williams, with the ripe experience of fifty-two years of an eventful life; with the patriot instincts of his Revolutionary sire; with a mind liberally educated and stored with much scientific and general information; with the pen of a ready writer which had done good service in our struggle for independence; with a judgment matured by a mercantile

intercourse abroad and high social position at home; with great decision of character and untiring zeal in the public service; and withal a most kind and polished gentleman and a brave and chivalric soldier. To such pledges for success in his important command, he added industry, exactness, patience and benevolence; hence under his eminent example the Academy quickly received tone and character, steadily advanced in discipline and usefulness, and brought forth golden fruit in its distinguished graduates.

Major Williams assumed his new command, May 13, 1802, but did not take up his residence at West Point till July 3d following. Meanwhile, in various communications to the Secretary of War and others, he presented his views of the object and wants of the projected Academy. He recommended the purchase of the best military and scientific books; the procuring of philosophical and other apparatus; the employment of artificers to make models; the detail of soldiers for general work; and proposed brief regulations for conducting studies, for occupancy of existing buildings, and for the command of the institution and post of West Point—the headquarters of the Corps of Engineers which, under the law of March 16, 1802, constituted the "Military Academy."

Under Major Williams, as Superintendent, the Military Academy was formally opened for instruction July 4, 1802, with nine Cadets*—Joseph G.

* Cadet literally means a younger brother; in France a young volunteer without pay and not enrolled, to whom a discharge cannot be refused; in Spain, a junior volunteer officer; in England and the United States a student in a military school preparing to be fitted for a commissioned officer

Swift, Joseph Proveaux, Simon M. Levy, Henry B. Jackson, Samuel Gates, William Gates, Walker K. Armistead, John Lillie and John Livingston—all of whom, except the last, had been appointed prior to the law of March 16, 1802, which authorized ten Cadets of engineers and forty of artillery. The Superintendent was without any military staff, and there were only two teachers—Captains William Amherst Barron and Jared Mansfield of the Corps of Engineers—both giving instruction in Mathematics, the former in the line of geometrical, the latter in that of algebraic demonstration.

With these slight appliances, instruction was necessarily much circumscribed; but Williams aspired to something higher than those feeble beginnings, as appears from one of his letters to an Engineer officer, in Washington, in which he says: "In your conversations with the Secretary of War pray impress upon his mind the importance of making any candidate for a commission serve some time as a Cadet, and then give proof of his merit before he is promoted. * * * Young men who care for nothing but the exterior of an officer, have no business among us. In all your conversations with the Secretary never lose sight of our leading *star*, which is not a little mathematical school, but a great National Establishment to turn out characters which in the course of time shall equal any in Europe. * * * We must always have it in mind that our officers are to be men of science, and such as will by their acquirements be entitled to the notice of learned societies. Could we arrive at such a state before the present

peace is disturbed, we may defy foreign invaders of all nations."

With a few Cadets and the addition by law of a Teacher of French and Drawing, the institution struggled on in its embryonic condition till the beginning of the academical session in April, 1803. Up to this time a Company of Artillery had been stationed at West Point to guard public property stored there after the Revolution. Between the Captain commanding this Company and the Superintendent of the Military Academy questions of authority had arisen which continued till May 21, 1803, when Captain Izard was ordered to Norfolk, Va., leaving, however, a detachment of his Company under Lieut. Osborne, thereby lessening but not removing the cause of irritation between the commander of the troops and that of the Academy.

Lieut.-Colonel Williams, whose duties as Chief Engineer had taken him to North Carolina to inspect the Coast Defences, on his return through Washington, in an interview with the Secretary of War to whom he had submitted the question of the rights of his command at West Point, found his authority over the troops would not be sustained by General Dearborn, then at the head of the War Department, whereupon, without a moment's hesitation, he threw up his commission, by which the Corps of Engineers lost its efficient Chief, his officers their adored father, and the Military Academy its devoted and distinguished Superintendent.

In his letter of resignation of June 20, 1803, he says:

"Nothing is more gratifying to my mind than the pursuit of scientific objects, and the station I was placed in, by the partiality of the President of the United States, gave me the pleasing hope that my future life would be so employed as at once to produce the best effect to my country that I am capable of, in the manner the most pleasing to my taste and disposition.

"The answer you have just been pleased to make to certain points, which I had the honor of submitting to you previous to my going to North Carolina, gives me the painful certainty that I can no longer hold my commission without a sense of humiliation which would not only render me contemptible in my own eyes, but totally destroy every shade of respectability with the officers of the Corps I command.

"I hope, sir, that notwithstanding this difference of opinion, you will represent me to the President in the most respectful terms, and believe that I am not influenced by any other motive than what I have stated."

The next day the Secretary urged Lieut.-Colonel Williams not to resign, but as there was no change in the Secretary's views, he adhered to his resolution and soon after took up his residence at Perth Amboy, N. J.

The points alluded to in Lieut.-Colonel Williams' letter of resignation, were in substance: That engineer officers have the same military authority, according to rank, as officers of any other corps; that two independent military commands cannot exist at the same post, and West Point being by law declared to

be the station of the Engineers, the chief of that Corps, when of higher grade, must command everything at that post; that the authority to arrest officers and confine soldiers belongs to Engineers in like circumstances as to other officers; that a senior Engineer could not be required to accept the parole or countersign from an inferior officer of any other Corps; and that the proceedings of a Court Martial ought not to be submitted to the revision of any officer inferior in rank to the highest engineer sitting on that court. On these issues the Secretary's opinion was, in effect, that, notwithstanding the General-in-Chief had just placed Major Wadsworth of the Engineers in command of the post and garrison of Fort Adams in the Mississippi Territory, no military command should be attached to any officer of Engineers, asserting that this principle was in accordance with general usage and the practice during our Revolutionary war.

The Secretary's principle is certainly not to be found in the law of March 16, 1802, organizing a Corps of Engineers to consist of officers of various grades with fixed *rank*, pay and emoluments, and with commissions from the President strictly charging all officers and soldiers under their command to be obedient to their orders. Certainly it was never denied that the officers of the Corps of Artillerists and Engineers, under the old peace establishment, were entitled to command according to seniority of rank, equally with the officers of infantry or cavalry, and why, by the separation of the Corps into two distinct corps—one of engineers and another of

artillery—all the authority should be transferred to one set of officers and none to the other, cannot be conceived, for the new organization was but a separation of artillerists from engineers.

The President was not empowered to *raise* but to *organize* a Corps of Engineers, as was well understood, by the transfer of suitable officers to it from the old Corps of Artillerists and Engineers. In fact, all were transferred with their original dates of commission, proving the new Corps of Artillerists and the new Corps of Engineers to be only a *continuation,* in separate branches, of the old Corps of Artillerists and Engineers. Certainly officers transferred to the Engineers felt at the time *elevated,* not *degraded* in rank and authority, or they would have remained in their former Corps.

That engineers have and can successfully command troops is attested by the practice of foreign nations as well as our own. In our day we have seen in command of corps and armies such well known engineers as Cavaignac, LaMoricière, Niel and Valliant in France; Gordon in China; Omer Pasha in the Crimean War; Napier in Abyssinia; and Todleben, recently at the head of the Russian forces in Turkey. During the late Civil War, out of our small body of Engineers eleven commanded Army Corps, five each an Army during a portion of the war, and many commanded Divisions, Brigades and Regiments; while on the Confederate side three engineers, Lee, Johnston and Beauregard, commanded great Armies.

Without a proper head the Military Academy

was fast going to destruction, and the only hope of restoring it was to induce Williams to return to his old position. An engineer officer writing to him, Oct. 9, 1804, says: "Never was West Point so much in want of you as at this moment. Everything is going to ruin. Morals and knowledge thrive little and courts martial and flogging prevail. The Military Academy, instead of being the seat of knowledge and the place of application, is fast turning into that of ignorance and idleness. However, I shall drop the subject, as I know it must be painful to you." Other officers of Engineers saw this same deplorable condition of things and earnestly, by interviews and letters, entreated Williams to return to service. Headed by Major Wadsworth, the senior officer, they went so far, Nov. 5, 1804, as to propose a direct appeal to the President in relation to the points in controversy which had occasioned Lieut.-Colonel Williams' resignation. There is no doubt the Secretary of War had discovered his error; but pride forbade his confessing it. Soon after, however, January, 1805, by placing Lieut. Swift, of the Engineers, in command of the post and artillery garrison at Fort Johnston, N. C., he yielded the point at issue to a Subaltern which he had denied to the Chief, for whose return to service both he and the President in many ways clearly manifested their sincere desire. General Wilkinson, the General-in-Chief, who had been most zealous in the good work, wrote to Lieut.-Colonel Williams: "I can report nothing more than that I know both the President and Secretary wish you to resume your commission; but there are delicacies on both sides

which I shall labor to accommodate." The following manly letter from Lieut.-Colonel Williams to General Wilkinson, dated Jan. 5, 1805, best expresses his views. * * * "I know your sentiments with respect to the rights of the engineers, and were your power equal to your disposition to do them justice, I would have no hesitation in submitting everything respecting myself to you; but there is a consistency of character which I can by no means consent to forfeit, and therefore, if I enter the army again, it must be with the full approbation of the government, and with a certainty that my situation will be rendered equally honorable and permanent. * * * How has it happened that the Corps of Engineers should be degraded below the other parts of the army? If it was worth organizing, it was surely worth while to have more of some sentiment of honor to compose it; but how can this ever be the case where they are exposed to be pointed at by the slow-moving finger of scorn which must inevitably follow the present humiliating system? A slight, but candid revision of the situation of the Corps, since this unfortunate question was first agitated, must evince the impossibility of its ever being reputably filled unless its rights are restored to it. Major Wadsworth avowedly remains only because he has not at present other resources, and is taking measures to enable him to resign.* Captain Mansfield has obtained a more lucrative office, and Captain Barron has assured me that the same reason induces him to

* Resigned February, 1805.

remain, and is looking out for some other means of support, and there are no applicants for engineer commissions. How can zeal be expected from men who, like the apothecary in Romeo and Juliet confess their 'poverty, not their will consents'? This thing is so unaccountable and so extraordinary that it seems to me like a dream, although it is eighteen months since the reality forced me out of the Corps. Were I to judge from the personal deportment and verbal expressions of the Secretary of War, before the last and decisive interview, I should have supposed the Corps of Engineers to have been in his estimation the most important part of the army, which he was disposed to cherish to the utmost in his power. The President expressed himself in relation to the Corps in terms not merely polite, but of the most friendly description. Where then is the cause of this change? I cannot charge it to any conduct of mine, because that, especially in the last piece of duty, appeared to be fully approved. Can it be owing to any jealousy in the other parts of the army? I think not, for all the officers I know are completely of my opinion, and our friend, Adjutant General Cushing, seemed to be of the opinion that a line might be adopted perfectly agreeable to the Secretary of War and me. What that line is he perhaps may tell you, but I know it not unless it be what I have stated."

To this letter Gen. Wilkinson replied, March 29, 1805: "I am authorized by the Secretary of War to inform you, that if agreeable to you, the President will reappoint you to the command of the Corps of

Engineers on the express condition that you are not to interfere with the discipline, police or command of the troops of the line but by his orders, to which alone you are to be subject, and that in all other respects you are to enjoy the honors due to your rank.

"Should this proposition be acceptable to you, you will be pleased to signify your disposition to the Secretary of War without delay, and in such explicit terms as may preclude misapprehension.

"The President is now at Monticello, but will be here about the 8th of next month, at which time, should it be agreeable to you, you may make a visit to the city in order to pay your respects to our superior.

"Permit me, sir, to add my earnest hopes that you may not pause for a determination in this case, because I am convinced you will stand acquitted by every professional man of intelligence and honor, should you embrace the proposition. It is unquestionable that the elevated pursuits of the *Corps du Génie* do not allow time for the necessary attention to the details, police, and discipline of the line, and it follows, as in other services, that the officers of that Corps should not be burthened with the responsibility attached to duties in their nature incompatible. But admitting the practice of other nations to be at variance with our own, if the United States are acknowledged to be sovereign and independent, we cannot deny to the regular authority powers and capacities to ordain such subordinate arrangements as may be deemed conducive to the public weal, and it

is the duty of every good citizen to conform, when such conformity does not affect his honor. In the case before us, the suspension of ex-official command is deemed essential to the interests of a particular corps, but no subversion of inherent principles or fundamental right takes effect, because *you are held liable to general command upon the orders of the President.*

"I beg to hear from you soon, and I hope to my satisfaction. You owe much to the partiality of the President, more to the claims of your country."

Major Macomb of the Engineers, subsequently General-in-Chief, in a private letter of April 2, 1805, expresses the desires of the Corps of Engineers: * * * "It is the wish, I am persuaded, of the officers of the Corps. You have had assurances enough of their attachment and I feel confident that you are interested in their welfare, and I believe it no flattery when I tell you that their respectability as a corps and their future prosperity depend almost entirely on your return. Feeling satisfied that you cannot resist the call of your country and the solicitations of your own Corps to take your former station, I am, etc."

This correspondence led to the General-in-Chief's official order of April 17, 1805, as follows:

"As the scientific pursuits of the Corps of Engineers do not allow time for attention to details, police, and discipline of the troops of the line, it follows, as in other services, that the officers of that corps should not be burthened with the responsibility attached to duties in their nature incompatible.

"The President has thought proper to decide that the officers of the Engineers shall not interfere with the discipline, police, or command of the troops of the line unless by his special order, to which alone they are subject.

"But this suspension of official command, though deemed essential to the interests of a particular corps, does not subvert any inherent principle, or fundamental right, because the superior officers of Engineers are held liable to be called into general command whenever the public service may require, and the will of the President direct.

"In all cases not affected by this regulation, the officers of the Corps of Engineers are invariably to enjoy the respect due to their commissions; and they are to receive the same honors which are paid to officers of similar grade in the line of the Army."

Lieut.-Colonel Williams accepted, April 19, 1805, the re-appointment of Chief Engineer, and writes to the Secretary of War: "In answer to the obliging information you have given me in the command of the Corps of Engineers, I beg leave to assure you that this honorable mark of favor has made a deep impression on me, and it is with heart-felt gratitude that I again offer to devote my life to the service of my country. I hope and trust that the President will permit me to resume my old commission in the same manner as if it had never been resigned. It must be evident to him that I never had a wish to quit the service, and that the circumstances by which I was influenced, although arising out of misapprehension, appeared to me paramount to my own will.

The explanation which has taken place has put the subject on a correct footing, which will not in future admit of mistake, and it is my wish so to come into service again that the whole might be buried in oblivion."

During the twenty-two months that Lieut.-Colonel Williams had been out of service neither the Military Academy nor the Corps of Engineers progressed one step. In that interval but two cadets had been graduated; "not a cadet's warrant was applied for" says the best authority; and, of the dozen who entered the Academy, half the appointments had probably been previously promised, and the other half were from the newly acquired Territory of Louisiana, perhaps more ostensibly to mark President Jefferson's important purchase, April 13, 1803, of that magnificent domain.

Immediately upon Lieut.-Colonel Williams being notified, April 22, 1805, of his re-appointment, he repaired to West Point and assumed command of the Military Academy. At once he vigorously applied himself to much needed reforms, the details of which more properly belong to the history of the Military Academy.

Notwithstanding his great industry and zealous devotion to the wants of that institution, Williams, as the head of the Corps of Engineers, was necessarily much of his time attending to professional duties, particularly the construction of the defenses of New York harbor, of which he took personal charge. During his absence from West Point the temporary command of the Academy devolved upon

the senior engineer present, who did not prove competent for that responsible duty.

Our foreign relations were such, in 1807, that the State of New York was unwilling to trust the safety of her great commercial capital to the small appropriations granted by Congress. Fortifications consequently were authorized to be erected on Staten Island for the defense of "the Narrows." The authorities having great confidence in Lieut.-Colonel Williams, (then superintending the inner defenses of the harbor of New York,) as a man of solid learning, sound judgment, and possessing a practical knowledge of the military art, selected him to plan and conduct their works (Forts Richmond and Tompkins). So devoted was he to those duties, which consumed most of his time, that the Freedom of the City of New York was bestowed upon him by the Corporation, Aug. 1, 1807, "in consideration of his important services in protecting and fortifying said city." Subsequently, Governor Daniel D. Tompkins of New York sent a large check to Lieut.-Colonel Williams in a very complimentary letter, saying: "Your services to the State are not only viewed by me, but also by the Legislature, in the most thankful manner." Perhaps it is unnecessary to add that the check was politely returned by the noble-minded recipient.

Williams with great vigor pressed forward these defenses of New York harbor, for to his mind war was inevitable, and not a moment was to be lost in providing for the protection of our great commercial capital.

The Treaty of Paris, of 1783, by which our independence was acknowledged by the mother country, was virtually a truce, not a peace. The Revolution had effected our political emancipation and proved our capacity for self-defense; but our moral, physical and mental independence were yet to be achieved, and the strength of republican and confederate nationality demonstrated. Wearied with war, we had continued, from the termination of our seven years' struggle, to practice patient forbearance under the pressure of accumulated wrongs. Great Britain, still our bitter enemy, had violated her plighted faith by retaining the American posts upon the northern frontier; her voice was loud along the border continually inciting the Indian savages to war upon us; our commerce was the prey of her cruisers and privateers; our merchant vessels were searched and our native sailors impressed upon the high seas; our trade and navigation became the sport of her cupidity and assumption; and the enormity of her paper blockades was exceeding all bounds. The British order in council of May 16, 1806, declared the whole French coast in a state of blockade; an order which Napoleon retaliated by his Berlin decree of Nov. 21, 1806, declaring the blockade of the British Islands; and this latter was answered by another order of the former, January 7, 1807, prohibiting all coast-trade with France. Great numbers of our vessels, under these oppressive orders and decrees, were seized by the cruisers of both belligerents and our lucrative neutral commerce was nearly destroyed. British ships of war hov-

ered, in warlike display, upon our coasts; blockaded our ports; penetrated our bays and rivers; anchored in our harbors; threatened our cities and towns with conflagration; and even fired upon the unprotected inhabitants of our shores. The public mind was highly incensed by these gross violations of our neutrality; but the climax of insolence was reached, June 22, 1807, in the ever memorable attack of the ship Leopard of fifty guns, under countenance of the British squadron anchored within American waters, upon the United States frigate Chesapeake, by which twenty-one men were killed or wounded. The President, by proclamation, interdicted our harbors and waters to all British armed vessels, forbade intercourse with them, and demanded immediate reparation for this last high-handed outrage; but not till four years after did the tardy atonement come. Another order in council was issued, Nov. 11, 1807, forbidding neutral vessels to enter French harbors until they had previously stopped at a British port and paid duties on their cargoes. Napoleon, not to be outdone, answered, Dec. 17, 1807, by his famous Milan decree, confiscating any vessel which should submit to British search or pay any duties to his great enemy.

The United States could no longer, with honor, permit its flag to be insulted, its citizens to be enslaved, and its property to be plundered on the highway of nations; but placed between the upper and nether millstones of two colossal powers and unprepared to contend with either, Congress, upon the recommendation of the President, temporized

by laying an embargo, Dec. 22, 1807, upon all vessels in American ports, and ordered the immediate return of all our shipping afloat.

This gloomy condition of things rendered it manifestly proper for the Chief Engineer to ask for an increase of his Corps, then composed of a few officers superintending an extended line of coast defenses; and to submit, Sept. 19, 1807, a project to remodel the Military Academy on a scale commensurate with the needs of the nation, placing its direction, external and internal, entirely in the hands of the President.

The rapid progress of events was fast culminating to a crisis. The dangers to our country arising from the contests of other nations; the ruin of our commerce in the Mediterranean; the capture of our vessels bound to the Baltic, France and Spain; the violation of our territory; the insults to our people, and the degrading of our character in the eyes of the whole world, roused the President to ask Congress, Feb. 25, 1808, for an augmentation of our military force to 6,000 regulars and 24,000 volunteers. Rapidly our situation grew more critical, and the great belligerents seemed determined to trample under foot the law of nations and annihilate every vestige of our neutrality.

President Jefferson, no longer doubting the constitutionality of a Military Academy, sent to Congress, March 18, 1808, the following special message.

"The scale on which the Military Academy at West Point was originally established has become too limited to furnish the number of well-instructed

subjects in the different branches of Artillery and Engineering which the service calls for. The want of such characters is already sensibly felt, and will be increased with the enlargement of our plans of military operation. The Chief Engineer having been instructed to consider the subject, and to propose an augmentation which might render the establishment commensurate with the present circumstances of our country, has made the report which I now transmit for the consideration of Congress."

The report of Colonel Williams (promoted Feb. 23, 1808) referred to by the President was a long document narrating the struggles of the Military Academy since its establishment, concluding with wise suggestions for its reorganization and improvement to which he had given the best efforts of his life.

With the new administration of President Madison, William Eustis became, March 9, 1809, the Secretary of War. Hardly had he been inducted into office before he began to show his hostility to the Military Academy, as his subsequent acts fully proved. He meant to crush it, notwithstanding our increasing dangers made it apparent that to his hands were entrusted the successful or disastrous issues of the nation's arms.

France had infringed her treaty, burned our vessels on the high seas, and subjected to capture our commerce with her maritime foe. Great Britain continued to violate our territory, depredate on our commerce, impress our seamen, exclude our exports from market, and subject to tribute the staples of

our country. Each power, under pretext of retaliating on us for our alleged submission to the other, had carried their injustice and violence beyond all bounds of endurance, and every possible form of negotiation having failed with both belligerents, nothing seemed left but war to preserve our liberty and honor.

Secretary Eustis began his administration of the War Department by an effort to disperse the few cadets at the Military Academy, degrade them to common laborers, and deprive them of all educational advantages. By mid-summer of 1810, he, by his failure to make new appointments and by his constant detail of cadets for clerks and company duties, had left so few at West Point that the Military Academy, except in name, had virtually ceased to exist; and discipline was so palsied by his constant intermeddling that only by the most summary measures could Williams preserve even its semblance.

Worn out by the apathy of Congress and Secretary Eustis' criminal perverseness and violation of all official courtesy and consideration, Williams began to despair. In a letter to Mr. Jefferson, of Sept. 15, 1810, he pours out his heart in lamentation over the noble institution founded by the ex-President: "I wish I could make use of your voice to excite our general Legislature to some attention to the Military Academy. We want military more than any other description of talent * * * and yet, strange to tell! we are cold, chilling cold, upon every subject relative to Military Instruction. Nine-tenths of Congress seem to me not only cold, but blind, stone

blind, to the true interests of our nation on the score of its defense. I have been engaged eight years in the embryo of a military seminary and have at last barely brought it into existence. It lives indeed, but, in comparison to what it ought to be, it is a *puny, rickety child.*

"I am tired, my dear sir, heartily tired; and although I never wished to terminate my labors but with my life, I must in future be excused from meddling with the Military Academy unless, by some means or other, I can see a prospect of producing some benefit to my country, and, pardon my vanity, some honor to myself."

President Madison, in an able state paper communicated to Congress, Dec. 5, 1810, set forth the usefulness and necessity of a properly organized Military Academy to teach the art of war with little expense to the nation, and without danger to the liberties of the people. Though Congress failed, in its short session, to carry out the President's earnest recommendations, it was hardly to be expected that his own chosen Cabinet Minister could, on the very verge of hostilities with one of the most powerful nations of the earth, have totally neglected his duty in carrying out the clearly expressed views of his chief, as he certainly did.

The hostility of Secretary Eustis to the Military Academy, the Corps of Engineers, and the adequate defense of our coast, had filled Williams' cup of bitterness to overflowing. To a proud, ambitious officer this condition of things was most humiliating, and bound hand and foot by the orders of a petty

tyrant who had some small spite to avenge, Colonel Williams felt there was no release but by resigning his commission. A warm friend writing to him, at this time, says: "I know all your difficulties and with what you have had to contend, but I think the prospect may brighten, and a few more months of anxiety perhaps will compensate for all, if the Nation is not determined on giving up everything that is, or has been military. * * * I would, if I were you, with such a Corps looking up to you, and I may say *to you alone*, sacrifice a little more before quitting it."

A few days later an officer of Engineers writes to him privately: "I am sorry to see you are in such bad spirits. If your exertions to promote the interests of the Institution committed to your charge have been unavailing, you ought not on that account to despond, for you can always console yourself with the conviction of having done your duty, and your Corps and country will ever bear testimony to your useful labors. If a man with your philosophy can not bear up with the apathy of government and that total disregard of everything but popularity, who can? You are the last man in the world I should suspect of being touched with anything coming from such men as have had, for these ten years past, the control of affairs (in the War Department). * * * We must with patience wait for a change for the better (for it cannot be worse), but always persevering in doing the best. If they neglect their duty it is no reason we should be disheartened, however great the obstacles may be which such neglect may throw in the way of your zeal. * * *

You hint a determination to resign, if certain circumstances more favorable to your views do not follow. * * * I hope it will be the last thing you will think of."

The Secretary of War, with the same imbecile spirit and policy which had characterized many of his acts since entering upon office, proposed to the Chairman of the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations, 1,000 regulars and 1,000 militia for manning *all* the defenses of our great commercial capital against the whole power of Britain's fleets; and hardly a respectable scarecrow of an army of 10,000 men to invade Canada and protect our extended coasts and frontiers.

The President's annual message led to animated debates in Congress upon the relative advantages of volunteer militia and regular troops. The advocates of volunteers contended that the raising of the former was in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution, and the latter dangerous to civil liberty, as proved by the overthrow of other nations. The supporters of regulars answered that the term volunteer was not to be found in the Constitution, and the visions, scruples, apprehensions and imaginary spectres of demagogues were not to be substituted for *its* provisions; that "the power to raise and support armies" was limited only by the national exigencies to be judged of by Congress; that Washington —wise in council and action, and experienced as soldier and statesman—had never recommended volunteers, had emphatically condemned militia as the source of all our disasters, and never had expressed apprehensions of a standing army; that since his

Presidency volunteer militia had been advocated mainly on the ground that if they did no good they could do no harm; that there was no danger to the nation from any species of force maintained by yearly appropriations and composed of our own citizens, sons and brothers; that the Rubicon was now passed, and it was not the time to try doubtful expedients in sustaining our foreign relations with energy and firmness; that war was an art not to be learned in a day, but a science whose principles must be long studied in schools or on the field; that all who had participated in our struggles knew the necessity of disciplined troops without which we could not meet European veterans landed on our shores; that the Democratic dogma of our chief reliance being upon militia was a fallacy, for, as Pickering said, it had "never done any good to the country, except in the single affair of Bunker Hill;" that the cry for a patriot not a mercenary army was mere claptrap, instancing the Continental soldiers as paid troops whose compensation did not lessen their patriotism nor diminish their gallantry; that even the Newburg letters of an artful incendiary could not inflame the impoverished Revolutionary army to deeds of violence or the sacrifice of our dear bought liberties; and that corruption, not military force, was the pregnant cause of the downfall of nations.

As we shall see in the following pages of this work, the volunteer militia, without experience, proved almost worthless till two disastrous campaigns had taught the necessity of drill and discipline, which

caused our arms to so gloriously triumph in the third campaign at Chippewa, Niagara, Plattsburg and Fort Erie; proving, as did our late civil contest, that no troops in the world ever surpassed our Volunteers when inured to war by constant training and battle, thus becoming, except in name, the bravest, best and most intelligent of Regulars.

In this connection we cannot forbear quoting from a brilliant speech delivered since the above was written. Addressing the Society of the Army of the Potomac, the eloquent orator of the occasion, the Rev. Dr. Henry Ward Beecher, said:

"Those who quake with dread at the mention of a standing army are under the influence of old prejudices, based upon European experience. Standing armies in the hands of ambitious monarchs, in the midst of a multitude of contiguous and jealous nations, are not to be the types of American armies. In the whole history of our government there has never been a disturbance or even a threat or suspicion of danger from the profession of arms in the regular army. Our most eminent officers have been profound lovers of peace. There has never been an accusation of plot or plan to augment their power or to usurp any function of government. We have had a boiling and bubbling caldron often, and our private citizens have brought fuel to it; our demagogues have roared, our politicians have plotted, our statesmen have plunged the country into blunders and whelmed it in war; but the army and the great generals whose names are our glory have never brought on a disturbance; have always counseled

for peace; have extricated the country from its embarrassments and dangers; and have, by their uniform and universal prudence, respect for law and good fellowship, proved themselves to be safer guides than have been our civil leaders. Since the founding of this government, I challenge the production of a single mischief-making military man. If any names are recalled of generals who have been rash and dangerous, in every instance they will be found to be extemporized generals, made out of professional politicians. Officers and soldiers are the very men who are above all others the friends of peace. Caucus and Congress are bellicose: the Army it is that is a National Peace Society.

"And yet no class of men of equal attainments and character and general ability are as severely criticised, as intentionally underrated, as unceremoniously crippled and abused, as our soldiers.

"This nation is indebted to the West Point Military Academy for as noble a band of graduates as the world can produce. The standard of honor is nowhere higher. Respect and reverence for law and liberty are nowhere more profound. Scrupulous fidelity to duty is nowhere more nearly a religion, and the honor of honesty, *the honor of honesty*, THE HONOR OF HONESTY, is nowhere so signally illustrated as in the graduates of the West Point Military Academy. What university, what college, what theological seminary can point to its two thousand graduates and say: 'There has never been an instance of dishonesty in the administration of public moneys?' The only institution in this country that

can say this is that Academy. And yet this noble cradle of noble men has never been pampered and dandled. Funds have been grudgingly voted for its bare subsistence; improvements have been resisted; it has been treated with suspicion and prejudice; and it has wrought out its unexampled results, not by abundance of means, but by the devotion of its corps of professors and teachers under the rigor of a financial system which has carried economy to stinginess.

"What, then, is the attitude of the United States Army to-day? The smallest in proportion to the population and the territory which it guards of any army on the globe! It has been in the field almost without rest for twenty years. It is scattered along a vast frontier, in small companies, watching night and day Mexican thieves, or fighting savages; marching through trackless wastes, in severest winter storms, or scorched by summer on arid plains; yielding up its Canbys and its Custers. It has been made the scapegoat of bad men. And all this while it is assailed in the rear by hounding politicians, who care nothing for its honor, who would retrench its numbers, diminish its revenues, and make hard and bitter the lives of men who have served their country at pains and perils which would have appalled the stoutest heart of the self-denying heroes of Caucus and Congress!"

To the same purport we further quote from a historical sketch by a forcible writer, H. C. C., on the "Labor Strikes of 1877." He says:

"Whisky riots, Orange riots, Anti-Slavery tumults,

Know-Nothing riots, Draft riots, Fenian disturbances, and finally the Railroad Strikes and Labor Troubles of the summer of 1877, have each, in turn, demonstrated the inability of the local constabulary to deal with them, and the stern, unavoidable necessity of calling to the rescue the trained, impartial soldier, who is 'a useless hireling' when the dear people do not shake with fear, and 'a patriot hero' when they do.

"The most jealous and exacting 'regular,' however, could ask no greater tribute to his business qualifications than was accorded him by the red-handed and blood-stained mobs of 1877. In every disturbed community where the customary guardians of the peace were powerless, and the gorgeously-attired militia failed to sustain themselves, even by the free use of bayonets and ball-cartridges, the measured tread of the national soldier was a sufficient signal for prompt retreat. His presence, with 'ten days' rations and two hundred rounds of ammunition,' intimated consequences and forbade affiliation, and the gamins of enraged Pittsburg were quick to see and say, 'Them fellars ain't got no bokays in *their* guns.'

"Not a Federal musket had to be fired at any point, and an insurrection which had spread with the celerity of a prairie fire over a dozen of the richest and most thickly-populated States of the Union, suspended transportation, paralyzed trade, destroyed life and property, awed capital, threatened to sack the Treasury at Washington and burn the beautiful Capitol building, and by its vast

extent and insolent ferocity had convulsed the civilized world, was quickly quelled by a handful of soldiers, the greater part of whom, to their eternal glorification be it recorded, were at that very moment, by a strange coincidence, serving without pay or prospect of pay for months to come, and with the bitter recollection of a Congressional motion to disband them by default fresh in their minds. No triumph of arms or character could have been grander than this silent exhibition of unconditional fidelity."

Both of the above quotations are only modifications of the sentiments of the truth-telling and wise Washington, who, after more than thirty years of civil and military experience (not in seeking office by denouncing Regulars and Standing Armies as menacing liberty and entailing Cæsarism), says:

"The jealousy of a standing army and the evils to be apprehended from one are remote and, in my judgment, situated and circumstanced as we are, not at all to be dreaded; but the consequence of wanting one, according to my ideas formed from the present view of things, is certain and inevitable ruin. For if I was called upon to declare upon oath whether the militia have been most serviceable or hurtful upon the whole, I should subscribe to the latter. I do not mean by this, however, to arraign the conduct of Congress; in so doing I should equally condemn my own measures. But experience, which is the best criterion to work by, so fully, clearly, and decisively reprobates the practice of trusting to militia that no man who regards his own honor or character will risk them upon this issue."

Secretary Eustis' hostility to Colonel Williams became at length so marked that he felt there was no alternative but to resign his position of Chief Engineer. Few traces of his feelings are to be found in his official correspondence; but the private letters of his devoted wife tell the story. "Have you heard," says she, "anything unpleasant from the Secretary, that you talk of resigning immediately? Make up your mind, and rest assured that I shall be perfectly happy in spending the rest of my life at Mount Pleasant if you can be content to relinquish the bustle of the world." Again she writes: "If you are sure you have not suffered personal resentment to influence you in the least, or to carry you one jot beyond the true line of moderation and propriety, I think you perfectly right to pursue your way regardless of consequences, and to support, whilst you belong to it, the interest and honor of the army and of the Corps to which you belong; only prepare yourself so as not to be fretted by anything they can do. Having already almost made up your mind to resign, it is as well to do all the good you can to those you leave behind you." Later she says: "I am quite grieved to see by every letter that you are in purgatory. * * * I think it unfortunate that you did not make up your mind to resign sooner. Now I presume that you must wait till the question of peace or war is decided. * * * We have sufficient with prudence to live upon; banish therefore all concern of that kind from your mind, and make a determination to give up your commission whenever the situation of the country will admit it."

The officers of his Corps, who, to the highest official respect, joined the most affectionate regard, entreated him not to resign. One speaks of the "almost paternal care of its beloved chief;" and another writes: "I am sorry to hear you talking of private life. * * * I believe your remaining at the head of the Corps, at this time, is more essential to its respectability and its happiness than it has been ever before. For now we have a Father who has the affection of his sons, and, without his protection and unceasing labors for their honor and welfare, they stand at present but a poor chance of arriving at that elevation in which you would wish to leave them."

Colonel Williams, nevertheless, July 10, 1812, tendered his resignation as Chief Engineer of the United States Army and ex-officio Superintendent of the Military Academy, which was accepted Aug. 29, to date July 31, 1812. The history of this transaction, involving military principles, will be given somewhat at length.

Colonel Williams, it will be recollected, had once before, June 20, 1803, resigned on a question of his rights of command. After twenty months, March 1, 1805, Lieut. Macomb wrote to him: "I rejoice to let you know that it has been hinted by the President that your return to the service would be very pleasing to him"; and, on the 29th, General Wilkinson from Washington, says: "The partiality which the President cherishes for you, and the service of your country, will not only justify but demand some concessions of opinion on doctrines

which depend much on feeling;" and, he continues, "*your right of command is held in trust* by the President, *and will be conferred* when it may be deemed convenient to the public service, in the meantime *you are subject to his orders only.*"

A general order, first approved by the Secretary of War, was then issued recognizing the principles above stated, and in two or three days afterward, April 19, 1805, Colonel Williams accepted his commission of Chief Engineer which he had resigned June 20, 1803.

The Act establishing the Rules and Regulations for the government of the Army, was passed April 10, 1806; and, by the 63d of these Articles of War, the power of the President to grant the command, by special engagement *held in trust* by him, is formally recognized and made law.

Till May 27, 1812, Colonel Williams continued to receive his orders from the War Department only; but on that day the Secretary of War, through the Acting Adjutant General, thought proper to turn him over to Brig.-General Bloomfield, to whom the command of the city and harbor of New York had been confided.

On the 21st of June, 1812, by the return of that post which brought to New York the Declaration of War against Great Britain, Colonel Williams claimed the command "held in trust by the President of the United States" and legally designated by the 63d Article of War. He says in a respectful letter: "By the 27th Section of the Act of March 16, 1802, it is declared that 'the Engineers shall be subject at all times to do duty in such

places and on such service as the President of the United States shall direct,' and by the 63d Article of War that 'the Engineers are not to assume nor are they subject to be ordered on any duty beyond the line of their immediate profession, *except by the special order of the President of the United States.*'

"While the peace establishment existed," says Colonel Williams, "I had but three superior officers—General Wilkinson and Colonels Burbeck and Cushing. I have now fourteen superiors, and, while I cannot assume the command of a subaltern, I am exposed to perform professional duty where a subaltern commands.

"War being now declared, my situation in this harbor becomes humiliating in the last degree. The works that have been constructed by me became inhabited and commanded by my inferiors, for in military command I have not the authority of a sergeant.

"I pray you, Sir, to relieve me from this unpleasant situation, and by a special order, which you alone can give, to place me in that which my nominal rank naturally points out and which my honor requires. I indulge in hope that this reasonable request will be complied with immediately and that by return of post I shall be placed in a command consistent with my character, and such as I hope, also, is not unmerited by the public services I have rendered."

On the 23d of June the President directed the required command to be given, which the Secretary of War communicated to General Bloomfield in the

following terms: "It is the pleasure of the President that, whenever the exigencies of the service may require the talents and knowledge of the officers of the Corps of Engineers beyond the line of their immediate profession, you may assign to those under your command such duties in the line of the army as may comport with their rank." On the 27th, General Bloomfield assured Colonel Williams that arrangements should be made to accord with his wishes.

The order was verbally communicated to Colonel Williams, Castle Williams designated as his post, and he gave on the 2d of July his estimate of the force and organization of its garrison. On the 7th he put the Engineers under the direction of Major Armistead, reported himself ready for duty, and was about to take quarters on Governor's Island to exercise the command due to his rank and in conformity to the President's order, communicated on the 23d of June by the Secretary of War.

A Memorial signed by eighteen company officers, principally subalterns, was directed to Colonel Burbeck, in command of the Artillery in the harbor of New York, and left on the table of General Bloomfield's quarters. This memorial indulged in much *ad captandum* declamation, expressed great personal respect for the Engineers, and acknowledged the "latitude given to the President by the Act of March 16, 1802, justifying him in assuming the power to call them to command troops;" but affirmed that "the officers of the Corps of Engineers are *by law*, *universal custom* and the importance of their professional

duties separated from the line of the army," forgetting that the law makes no such declaration and that there can be no "universal custom" in a country where there never had been a regular Corps of Engineers fully organized till the existing enactment of 1802, the foreign engineers, during the Revolution and subsequently, having been specifically employed as separate individuals connected by no defined corps organization whatever.

On the rumor of this opposition General Bloomfield had, on the 6th of July, written to the Secretary of War for fresh instructions, and on the 11th the Secretary answered, "leaving the employment of the Engineers altogether subject to his judgment and decision." While awaiting the Secretary's reply, General Bloomfield had, on the 10th, communicated to Colonel Williams a copy of his suspended order, which was to have been promulgated on the 9th. It is as follows:

"It being 'the pleasure of the President,' that '*whenever the exigencies of the service may require* the talents and knowledge of the officers of the Corps of Engineers, beyond the line of their immediate profession,' that those under command at this post 'be assigned such duties in the line of the army as may comport with their rank;' and the General commanding, believing that '*the exigencies of the service require*' on this occasion the talents and abilities of Jonathan Williams, Esq., the Colonel of the Corps of Engineers, therefore, in pursuance of the orders of the President, directs that Colonel Williams take upon himself such duties in the line

of the army stationed in this harbor and city, as may comport with the rank of Colonel in the Army and service of the United States, according to seniority of commission; and he is to be respected and obeyed accordingly." (Signed,) Joseph Bloomfield.

A copy of the remonstrance of the eighteen company officers was also communicated to Colonel Williams to explain the suspension of the above order. In forwarding this remonstrance, on the 9th, to the Secretary of War, General Bloomfield says: "I have deemed it correct to exercise that discretion with which the pleasure of the President has honored me, to suspend calling Colonel Williams or any of the Corps of Engineers to exercise the duties in the line of the army contemplated by your communication of the 23d of June last, until I shall be favored with the further orders of the President in this unpleasant business."

Upon receiving, on July 10th, the above communication from General Bloomfield, Colonel Williams wrote to the President of the United States as follows:

"Since my letter to you of the 21st of June, General Bloomfield communicated to me an order from the Secretary of War which in substance agreed with the request I had the honor to make to you, and of which you have a copy enclosed. After completing some official duties at Philadelphia I returned to New York and reported myself ready to take such command as might 'comport with my rank.'

"General Bloomfield was about to issue the requi-

site order when he received a communication of which I enclose a copy, being a remonstrance against the measure signed by eighteen company officers. Far be it from me, Sir, to create any division among men whose profession, of all others, should form a well connected and affectionate brotherhood. But I must be permitted to judge for myself in what relates personally to me, therefore it only remains to do the last act that can be done consistently with my honor and a desire to preserve harmony among the officers in the army, and I hereby resign my commission.

"The case is too imperious to need much argument; but it may not be improper to observe that after having resigned on a former occasion, I was called again into service upon an express stipulation which was afterwards made law by the 63d Article of the Rules and Regulations for the government of the Army. This being the condition upon which alone I accepted my commission, I hold myself absolved from all obligation the moment it ceases to operate. The loss of an officer in his sixty-third year may not be considered of great importance when compared with that of eighteen officers in the vigor of youth, for by the tone of the remonstrance it is to be presumed that this consequence would follow if the order were to be enforced."

At the same time Colonel Williams wrote to Secretary Eustis: "For reasons offered to the President of the United States, I have resigned and do hereby resign my commission as Colonel in the Corps of Engineers."

Colonel Williams announced his resignation to his command in a feeling and manly order, concluding thus:

"In making this communication to the Corps of Engineers, the Colonel Commandant is equally influenced, by motives of self justification, to those for whom he has, from the first moment of his connection with them, felt the affection of a parent; and of leaving behind him a monument of his sense of what is due to the honor of that Corps, which is by the records of the Army placed at the Head of the List. That it may never suffer the humiliation of being deprived of those rights, which the other Corps indiscriminately enjoy, shall ever be his constant prayer.

"Farewell, my dear Friends! Farewell!"

General T. H. Cushing, Adjutant General of the Army, in transmitting, Aug. 29, 1812, the acceptance of Colonel Williams' resignation, "to take effect on the 31st July, 1812," adds the following private letter:

"In communicating an order which dissolves our connection as Brothers in Arms, permit me to offer my warmest wishes for your prosperity, happiness and honour, and to express the regret I feel, in common with many respectable military and civil friends, at the public loss sustained by the resignation of an officer so distinguished for Intelligence, Industry and Zeal in the public service."

Thus was lost to the Army one of its brightest ornaments; to the Corps of Engineers a Chief whose devotion to its welfare and honor was unbounded;

and to the Military Academy an Alma Pater, who for years tenderly watched over its infancy and long struggled for its advancement and eminence against the continued apathy of Congress, the feeble support of Secretary Dearborn, and the bitter hostility of his narrow-minded successor.

It will be naturally asked why the administration of President Madison had not essayed some adjustment of difficulties in the seven weeks it had held Colonel Williams' resignation under consideration. Why, if it valued his great services and eminent abilities, it had not declined to allow him to leave the head of his distinguished Corps? or why, to cut the Gordian knot of his just rights, it had not generously given one of its noblest veterans, fourth in rank in the whole Army, a higher grade instead of conferring such superior appointments upon inferior men unknown to fame? It was because William Eustis was Secretary of War and could not, nor would not, rise "to the height of this great argument" in a manner befitting a Cabinet Minister of the infant Republic entering upon a death struggle with a giant of the earth. His hostility, somewhat political, (Williams being a Federalist of the Washington school) was more splenetical, he having, from his entrance upon office, vowed war against the Military Academy and Corps of Engineers. Bourbon-like, he knew nothing of military matters beyond what he had learned in the Revolution, where our engineers were soldiers of fortune serving for pay and titles, with, except in name, no more rank and command than so many wagon-masters. In the prejudiced

mind of an ignorant Secretary, those Revolutionary ideas were paramount to all our subsequent experience, and it was not for his narrow comprehension to appreciate the noble disinterestedness of one who had created a Corps of Engineers from native talent; who had organized a Military Academy for the education of our own officers; who had completely metamorphosed our coast defences; and who, as President Jefferson had said, combined the virtues with the love of science of his illustrious kinsman—Dr. Benjamin Franklin.

After his resignation, Colonel Williams retired to his beautiful country seat, on the banks of the Schuylkill, to enjoy that repose which had been denied him for long years. In imitation of Metastasio, he could now say:

> "Thanks dear ——, indulgent cheat,
> Kind Heaven, and your more kind deceit,
> At length have set me free.
> I feel no rival's proud control,
> I feel no inmate in my soul
> But peace and liberty."

At Mount Pleasant he received constant tokens of the attachment of his brother officers and of the civilians who had been associated with him. In a private letter, DeWitt Clinton says: "If we consider your absence from the Commission for the Defense of New York Harbor as so great a privation to us as an individual, be assured that your resignation as an officer is a subject of general regret, considering our exposed situation and the confidence reposed in you by all our citizens. We esteem your departure as a loss that cannot be supplied."

General Morton of New York writes: "I cannot suppress a feeling of indignation when I reflect that, from the weakness and wickedness of men in office, we have lost the virtues and talents which would have benefitted and honored our country."

Major Swift echoes the unanimous sentiments of his brother engineers when he says to Colonel Williams: "The Corps are never to be without your aid so long as you remain on this world's stage; and you can never be without their grateful regard." As they could no longer enjoy his presence at West Point, the Corps of Engineers requested him to sit for his full-length likeness which was executed by Sully and now adorns the library of the Military Academy. A copy of the same was ordered, November 1, 1813, by the City of New York, "in consideration of the high sense the Common Council entertain of the important services rendered to the city by Colonel Jonathan Williams in preparing and executing plans of defense for the Port, and as an evidence of the distinguished esteem they entertain for his character and professional talents."

Governor Tompkins of New York, highly estimating Colonel Williams' talents and services to the State, conferred upon him, May 17, 1814, the Brevet of Brigadier-General of the State Militia; and, Feb. 13, 1815, he was commissioned a full Brigadier-General, by a vote of the Legislature of New York.

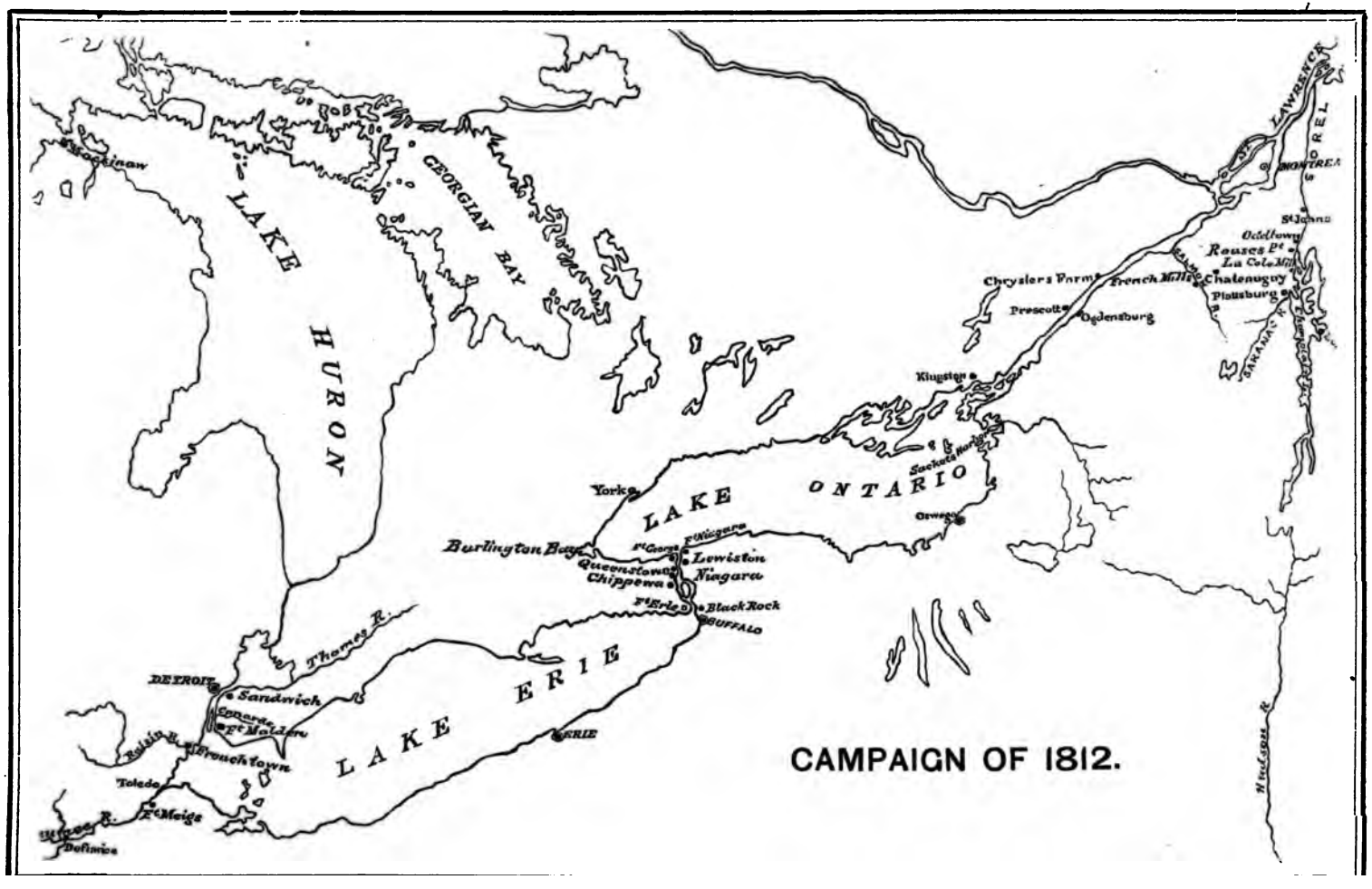
These were no uncommon testimonials to the talents and character of a citizen of another state stationed among them only for a few years.

After the retirement of Secretary Eustis from

the office he had so unworthily filled, his successor—General Armstrong—a soldier who properly estimated true merit and eminent services, made, with the President's sanction, through John Bullus, Navy Agent at New York, a proposition for Colonel Williams' return to the head of the Corps of Engineers, with the rank of Major-General, which, for some unknown reason, was not carried into effect, though Williams had intimated, April 29, 1813, "that such an offer could not be declined consistently with the sentiments he had avowed relative to the service," particularly as the government by its late acts had "acquiesced in the principles for which he had contended."

Hardly had Colonel Williams returned to private life before he was called from his retirement to become the executive member of the Committee of Defense of the Delaware River and Bay for the security of Philadelphia. At the same time he was frequently consulted respecting the fortifications of New York harbor; many things relating to the Military Academy; and was the presiding director of the Lancaster and Schuylkill Bridge Company.

In the autumn of 1814, General Williams' fellow citizens of Philadelphia, relying upon his superior abilities and varied experience, elected him to Congress; but he was not destined to add a statesman's reputation to that of a useful citizen, a firm patriot, and an accomplished soldier, death having, May 16, 1815, removed him, at the age of sixty-five to a higher reward than he had received on earth.


LAKE HURON
GEORGIAN BAY
LAKE ONTARIO
LAKE ERIE
LAWRENCE R.
Mackinaw
Chryslers Farm
French Mills
Chateauguy
Plattsburg
Prescott
Ogdensburg
Kingston
Sackets Harbor
York
Oswego
Burlington Bay
Ft George
Ft Niagara
Lewiston
Queenstown
Chippewa
Niagara
Ft Erie
Black Rock
BUFFALO
Thames R.
DETROIT
Sandwich
Amherstburg
Ft Malden
Raisin R.
Frenchtown
Toledo
Ft Meigs
Ft Stephenson
Sandusky
ERIE
Detroit
CAMPAIGN OF 1812.

CHAPTER SECOND.

CAMPAIGN OF 1812;

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF

MAJOR-GENERAL JOSEPH G. TOTTEN.

When War was declared against Great Britain, June 18, 1812, there were only thirteen Engineer Graduates of the Military Academy in the Army. Of these, some were occupied in fortifying the Atlantic coast, and some employed as instructors at West Point, leaving only seven available for service on the Canada frontier, where, in the course of the war, each of these latter gained one or two brevets for gallant and meritorious conduct. Among the most distinguished then, and in his subsequent career, was the officer whose biographical sketch is given in this chapter.

Joseph Gilbert Totten was born in New Haven, Conn., August 23, 1788. His schoolmate—Ralph Ingersoll—describes him as a bright, noble youth, of fine mind, fond of study, and always at the head of his class, gentlemanly in his deportment, and greatly beloved. He entered the Military Academy Nov. 4. 1802, under the auspices of his uncle, Captain Jared Mansfield, then an Acting Professor of Mathematics at West Point; was graduated from that institution July 1, 1805, when he was promoted to be a Second Lieutenant of Engineers; and resigned from the

Army March 31, 1806, to accompany, as Secretary, his uncle, Captain Mansfield, who had been appointed by President Jefferson, Surveyor-General of Ohio and the Northwest Territory. Young Totten, Feb. 23, 1808, re-entered the Corps of Engineers; was promoted to be a First Lieutenant July 23, 1810, and Captain July 31, 1812; and served, till the outbreak of hostilities with Great Britain, at Castles Williams and Clinton, then under construction, for the defense of New York. At the early age of twenty-four he became the Chief Engineer, in the Campaign of 1812, on the Niagara frontier of the "Army of the Centre" under General Van Rensselaer,

In conducting this campaign, the United States attempted to invade Canada with one column (Army of the Northwest) crossing the Detroit straits; another (Army of the Centre) passing the Niagara river; and a third (Army of the North) moving from the foot of Lake Champlain to threaten Montreal; besides minor isolated operations of little importance.

ARMY OF THE NORTHWEST.—Major-General Hull, with a force of 2,000, chiefly of western militia, in excellent health and spirits, reached Detroit, his base of operations, seventeen days after the declaration of war; crossed the straits into Canada, July 12, 1812, without opposition; found the population, if not friendly, hardly to be called hostile; was abundantly supplied from the resources of the country; and the only avowed foe was at Fort Malden, scarce eighteen miles off by an unobstructed road. Notwithstanding these fortuitous circumstances of time,

place, and relative strength, when it was of the utmost importance quickly to strike a blow at this indefensible work* with a feeble garrison, Hull, during a month, did nothing but send two or three unsupported detachments to the Canards, a small stream four miles short of this object; marched back his army to Detroit on the 7th of August; with little resistance allowed himself, by the defeat of his inadequate detachments sent to Brownstown and Maguago, to be cut from his base of supplies; capitulated to an inferior force without a show of opposition; and to crown his unspeakable disgrace, gave up a well-armed fort, his entire army and the whole of Michigan Territory, thus ending his five weeks' campaign most disastrously to our arms.

ARMY OF THE CENTRE.—Early in Oct., 1812, we had on the Niagara, stretching from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, 6,300 regulars and militia; about half, under the immediate command of Major-General Stephen Van Rensselaer, being at and near Lewiston, N. Y. On the morning of Oct. 13th, a force of 600, half regulars and half militia, was to cross the Niagara and take possession of Queenstown Heights, when the remaining troops were to follow and drive the British from the town. Owing to the insufficiency of boats, only about 300, mostly regulars, made the first crossing; scaled the steep ascent

* A train of heavy artillery was not required to batter a breach for the assault; it was not necessary to fire a single gun; not a cartridge need have been expended; the bayonet alone was adequate to have taken Malden at any hour from the moment the American army crossed into Canada till its most shameful retreat. *The fort was not enclosed! one entire side was open to assault!*

against all opposition; stormed and carried the redan battery half way up the slope; and took possession of the Heights after desperate fighting with the reinforcements from Fort George, under General Brock, who was killed. For hours we remained masters of the position, which Captain Totten of the Engineers strengthened by every means at hand; while Lieut.-Colonel Winfield Scott (the future conqueror of Mexico), anxiously awaiting reinforcements from Lewiston, brushed away a body of Indians which much annoyed him; but about 4 P. M. he was assailed by the whole British force of a thousand troops (supported by their savage allies) under General Sheaffe. Van Rensselaer did his utmost to induce the militia at Lewiston, by stirring appeals to their humanity and patriotism, to cross the Niagara to support their comrades, but *constitutional scruples* forbade them to leave their State, where there was no enemy—or rather the distant smell of gunpowder paralyzed the honor and courage of these poltroons, who tremblingly, from the American shore, watched the inevitable butchery or captivity of the brave and devoted band on Queenstown Heights, which, after a heroic resistance, was compelled to capitulate to a greatly superior foe. The bearers of two flags of truce having been shot down by the Indians, Colonel Scott himself, fixing a white cravat on the point of his sword, and accompanied by Captains Gibson and Totten (from whose neck the improvised signal of submission was taken), marched through a shower of Indian bullets, and barely escaped the knives and tomahawks of two savages, who leaped like tigers

upon them from the road. Unhurt, as by a miracle, they finally reached General Sheaffe, to whom was surrendered our whole force on the Canada side of the river, consisting of 293 survivors of the fierce battles, and some 600 skulkers, who had done no more fighting than spectators in a balloon might have claimed.

This second invasion of Canada, though more creditable to our arms, was as unproductive of results as Hull's ridiculous promenade down the river and up again. General Van Rensselaer, disgusted with the conduct of the militia at Lewiston, resigned his commission, and was succeeded in command by General Smyth. Having 4,500 troops about Black Rock, the new chief, after many braggart orders, and proclaiming his anxiety "to die for his country," resolved to invade Canada on the morning of Nov. 29, 1812. Two detachments, one of regulars and seamen, the other of volunteers, were sent across the Niagara to secure a landing for his army, which, though gallantly conducted, failed in the darkness, through want of proper concert of action, to effect their object. The General-in-Chief, who was spoiling for a fight, notwithstanding this mishap, ordered his troops to man their boats at sunrise, where for hours they sat shivering in the cold till he concluded that by Shrewsbury clock it was time "to disembark *and dine*," and thus spare Canada from the smell of villainous saltpetre. Soon after, in a duel with his subordinate, General P. B. Porter, who had accused him of cowardice, he fired his only shot on the Niagara, which fell as harmless to his antagonist as

his terrible threats of invasion to Canada. The only other event, during Smyth's command on this frontier, was the bombardment of Fort Niagara, Nov. 21, 1812, where Lieut.-Colonel W. K. Armistead, Chief Engineer to Major-General Dearborn, was engaged.

ARMY OF THE NORTH.—Major-General Dearborn, in command of about 7,000 troops, near the foot of Lake Champlain, was ordered "not to lose a moment in attacking the British posts in his front;" yet he tarried till Nov. 16, 1812, before moving to invade Canada; crossed the frontier toward Odell Town, with 3,000 regulars and 2,000 militia, with what ultimate object no one knew; confronted a mixed British force under Lieut.-Colonel De Salaberry on the La Cole; crossed this little tributary of the Sorel on the 20th; surrounded a block-house from which the small garrison escaped through our line; enjoyed a brief half-hour's contest with some New York militia, coming from another direction, before finding out the mistake; and when discovering the real enemy in front, both detachments beat a retreat, to return to winter quarters, thus ending their fruitless expedition.

The operations against the British and their Indian allies in the Northwest, and the abortive winter expedition in 1812–13 of Major-General Harrison's army to recover Michigan Territory will be described in the next chapter.

From the foregoing narrative of events, it will be seen that the Campaign of 1812, from beginning to end, was a stupendous blunder, for which the War Department must be held mainly accountable.

William Eustis, the Secretary of War, was doubt-

less a worthy gentleman in private life, and had made a respectable member of Congress from the State of Massachusetts; but he certainly lacked those commanding talents and enlarged views requisite to a wise administration of the War Department in a great crisis. When he entered President Madison's Cabinet in 1809, though war was impending, he forgot that he held a statesman's place, and was content, with folded arms, to play the role of a party demagogue. During his three years in office preceding the war, he proposed no adequate measures to increase our armies; he asked for no sufficient appropriations for the defense of our coasts; he failed to provide for the necessary munitions of war; he strangled the Military Academy, our only school for educating officers; he sneered at all judicious plans for meeting the enemy; and at last when roused from his lethargy by actual hostilities, he expected Canada to be conquered by 10,000 raw recruits, mostly militia, led by old incompetent generals exhumed from the Revolution.

As Secretary of War he was primarily accountable for the plans of the campaign, and the means of conducting them to a fortunate issue, which involved the selection of the *points* of attack, the *time* for making them, the *force* to command success, and the *appointment* of skilful generals to ensure victory.

Points of Attack.—British America, in its military relations to the United States, may be assimilated to a *tree*, of which Halifax is the *tap-root*, Quebec the *stump*, Montreal the *trunk*, Niagara river

the *lower limbs*, and the Upper Lakes the *top branches*. To sever the tap-root is to annihilate the tree; curtail it to the stump and little is left; cutting the trunk amputates the branches; but lopping off its limbs simply mars its beauty and inflicts only temporary wounds. Therefore to possess ourselves of British America, it was necessary to aim our blows at the *lower* not the *higher* points.

Halifax, the lowest of these points, with its large dock-yard, ample arsenal, and excellent port, was the great rendezvous and principal American station of British naval power; it was the bastion jutting into the ocean from which England could project her ships of war, like missile weapons, upon the wings of every wind, to flank our entire Atlantic coast; and it was the citadel of Britain's strength, never, like the ice-bound St. Lawrence, closed to her assistance. By seizing it the naval power of England in America would be paralyzed, one of her great nurseries of seamen destroyed, and Canada cut off from all support of the mother country. Certainly Halifax in 1812, with its small population and feeble fortifications, was not so difficult a conquest as was Louisburg in 1745, when, without British troops, the gallant Peperell, with his brave New Englanders, captured that well-armed and strongly garrisoned fortress, built at enormous cost, and with all the skill of French engineering art. When it was proposed by Major Jesup (subsequently Quartermaster-General of our army) to deal here a death-blow to British power in America, Secretary Eustis sneered at it, merely remarking that "it was a very pretty plan."

Quebec was the next vital point through which to attack British America. Wolfe's army, in 1759, had wrenched it from the French by a single battle in its front; and, in 1775, it probably would have been carried by assault by our handful of Revolutionary heroes, had the points of attack been better selected, Arnold the leader of one storming column not been wounded, and Montgomery the leader of the other not been killed. Certainly to reach it, in 1812, was a much less difficult enterprise than Arnold's memorable march through the wilderness of Maine in 1775.

Montreal, the third most important point in British America, had capitulated to General Amherst in 1760, and was captured by a small body of our Continental Army in 1775. The Sorel river, by which it was directly approached, had been the theatre of active operations in every campaign from the beginning of the old French war till Burgoyne marched, in 1777, to his surrender at Saratoga. The feeble British force, on this important strategic line, could not have been any serious obstacle to American invasion in 1812, had it been conducted with half the enterprise of Montgomery's expedition in 1775.

The Niagara (or rather the fort of that name built by the French in 1750 at the river's mouth,) had been only a small link in the chain of British operations till 1759, when the fort fell into their possession. By the Treaty of Paris, in 1783, it became an American post, and had some importance in commanding the entrance to the river from Lake Ontario; but it,

and points higher up the stream were of little consequence in the attack of Canada.

Detroit and Mackinaw had no military value except as good positions for the command of the water communications to the Upper Lakes.

Secretary Eustis, though no soldier, must have read enough of the military history of the wars in Canada to know that British America was not to be destroyed by striking at the twigs and branches of the tree to which we likened the enemy's territory along our northern frontier; yet, he sanctioned the invasion of Canada from Detroit Straits, Niagara River, and Lake Champlain, points about 400 miles apart, measured on the nearest roads. As we have seen, this resulted in Hull's abortive effort and ignominious surrender of Fort Detroit, his army, and Michigan territory, without pulling a trigger; Van Rensselaer's and Smyth's disgraceful failures on the Niagara; and Dearborn's grand strategic march from Lake Champlain to capture a small block-house, and return with his laurels to winter quarters.

Time of Attack. — The principal advantage accruing to a nation, which is the first to declare war, is that of selecting its *time* as well as its *point* of attack. War with Great Britain had been for years an almost certainty; yet when declared, little preparation had been made at once to strike a deadly blow. On that day, June 18, 1812, Secretary Eustis wrote two letters to General Hull, then separated from the frontier by one hundred miles of wilderness, instead of being on it ready for action. In one of these letters no mention was made of the

declaration of war; in the other it was distinctly and officially announced. The former was carefully despatched by a special messenger, while the latter was sent by the ordinary mail. The result was that the notice of the declaration of war did not reach its destination *till eight days after it was received by the enemy, under the franked envelope of our own Secretary of the Treasury.* In consequence of this tardy and inexcusable transmittal of the most vital information, Hull's sick and convalescents, baggage, stores, intrenching tools, army returns, and government instructions, sent by water *in advance of his troops*, were all captured opposite Malden, by a British subaltern with six men; and the commandant of St. Josephs, with thirty regulars and a rabble of engagées and savages, was enabled to take possession of our fort at Mackinaw, without even a formal refusal to surrender.

When the attempted invasion of Canada was finally essayed, instead of being made at one point, or simultaneously from the several selected, the Detroit was crossed July 12th by Hull; the Niagara at Queenstown Oct. 13th by Van Rensselaer, and again, Nov. 29th, by Smyth's vanguard; and not till Nov. 16th did Dearborn move from Lake Champlain upon that formidable block-house on the La Cole. This neglect of synchronous movements enabled Brock to oppose Hull with his whole British force on the Detroit, and move back to the Niagara in time to defeat Van Rensselaer at Queenstown; Sheaffe, his successor in command, to render abortive Smyth's projected invasion from Black Rock; and

De Salaberry's small force to induce Dearborn to yield his dreams of conquest for comfortable winter quarters on Lake Champlain.

FORCE FOR ATTACK.—The third element of the campaign was the *force* to be employed. When the war was declared, Hull had 2,000 troops of all arms, mostly militia and volunteers; the returns of Sept. 12, 1812, show, within Dearborn's command on the Niagara and Lake Champlain, a force of 13,000. The British regulars at the same time were about 4,500, which, with a larger number of Canadian militia and Indian allies, were scattered from Quebec to Lake Superior. Upon the outbreak of war, had an army, even of 13,000, been led by a skilful general against our weaker antagonist on a single, instead of three or four points of the frontier, our invasion of Canada must have been a success, and a peace have been conquered in a short campaign; for the British could oppose but few regulars, the border Indians were neutral, the Canadians were disposed to be friendly, the mother country was completely surprised by our declaration of hostilities, and Great Britain was wholly absorbed in her mighty struggle with the Conqueror of Europe.

ARMY COMMANDERS.—The last, and not the least important element of the campaign was the selection of *Generals*. Instead of choosing young, active and enterprising leaders for our armies, like Brown, Jackson, Scott, Gaines, Williams, Swift, McRee, Jesup, Totten, Wood, Kearny, Thayer, etc., such men were appointed to high commands as Hull, Harrison, Dearborn, Smyth, Chandler, Winder, Bloomfield,

Winchester, etc.; some, gray-headed veterans, whose faculties were benumbed by the frosts of age; some who had never set a squadron in the field; some distinguished only for inactivity and barrenness of mind; some whose names were wedded to disaster; and none who won a single laurel in the campaign.

CONCLUSION.—Such was the inglorious fiasco of 1812, for which William Eustis, as Secretary of War, was mainly responsible. Instead of conquering a peace in a few weeks by one vigorous blow at the vitals of the enemy, hardly roused to the existence of the war, he began hostilities without preparation or any knowledge of the opposing force; communicated our declaration of war to the foe before making it known to our own commanders; selected senile and inert generals to lead our armies, composed mainly of raw recruits; scattered our forces over a thousand miles of frontier without mutual support or concert of action; neglected to draw in the garrisons from isolated and distant posts exposed to capture; permitted the enemy to concentrate with impunity to repulse our threatened attacks; assailed the least vital points instead of dealing blows at the heart of the adversary; consumed six months in fruitless efforts when a single battle, by the mass of our force at the true objective point, would have decided the contest; commenced operations in a spirit of paltry parsimony and ended with lavish and unjustifiable prodigality; and, in fine, tarnished our arms with a succession of defeats, made blunders that were crimes, and inflicted deep disgrace upon the nation which two years more of

war scarcely effaced. Had a Carnot or Stanton been Minister of War, either Halifax would have been vigorously attacked, as proposed by Jesup; or Quebec been carried as by Wolfe's army in 1759; or Montreal been captured as by Montgomery in 1775; and the campaign have had a glorious issue. But Secretary Eustis, ignorant of the first rudiments of the military profession, proposed trying to kill the British Lion by pinching his tail at Detroit, or pulling his mane on the Niagara. His stupendous folly culminated in the capture of Mackinaw; the massacre at Fort Dearborn; the destruction of Van Horn's detachment by Tecumseh; the surrender of Michigan Territory and an army at Detroit, unparalleled by the capitulation of Ulm or Beylen; the miserable failures to cross the Niagara at Lewiston and Black Rock; the pitiful miscarriage of Dearborn near Lake Champlain; and the absurd winter march of Harrison's "press of western chivalry" for the recovery of Detroit, in violation of every military principle, and successful only as a magnificent raid upon the Treasury. Chaos reigned supreme till the campaign closed in total eclipse, without one redeeming feature to raise it above the utter contempt of military criticism.

Such an accumulation of disasters was justly visited by an indignant and outraged public upon the chief author of all our woes—Secretary Eustis—who was waited upon by a committee of Congressmen of his own party, and compelled to tender his resignation, which was immediately accepted by the President.

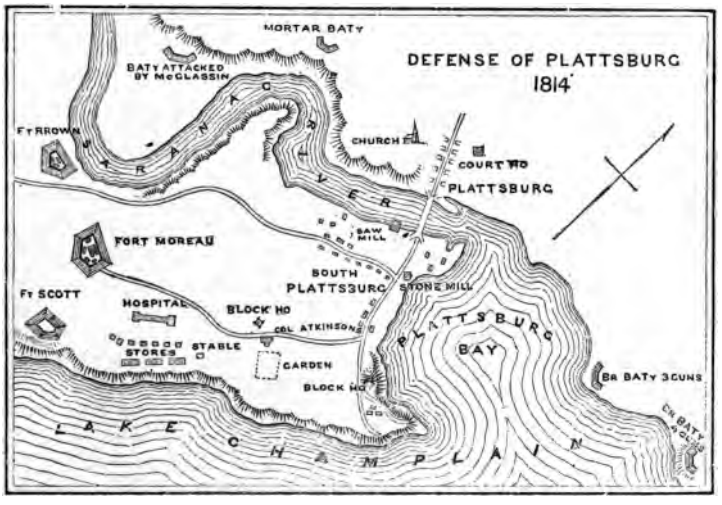
We have dwelt so long in narrating and criticising this campaign, that we must greatly abridge what we had to say of Captain Totten, who was in no way responsible for the plan of military operations in 1812. Upon the resignation of General Van Rensselaer, he was transferred as Chief Engineer to the Army of the North, under General Dearborn, who, in the spring of 1813, assembled 4,000 troops at the head of Lake Ontario, with which it was designed to land in Burlington Bay; then to take in reverse all the British defenses along the Niagara river, and cut their communications with Kingston and Montreal. In carrying out this project, Fort George, at the mouth of the Niagara, had first to be captured, an operation which was brilliantly executed May 27, 1813. Here Totten so distinguished himself as an engineer, that the commanding General strongly commended him, with only four others, to the War Department for "their judicious and skilful execution in destroying the enemy's batteries." Again, June 6th, in the repulse of the British flotilla on Lake Ontario, much of the damage was due to the hot shot heated in a furnace he had improvised at the mouth of Forty-mile Creek. For his "meritorious services," in this last operation, he was brevetted a Major, though he had won that honor ten days before at Fort George. When Dearborn was recalled, July 15th, Totten, having completed the defenses of our camp at Fort George, joined Colonel Swift, Wilkinson's Chief Engineer, at Sackett's Harbor, as his assistant in the St. Lawrence campaign, which terminated November 14th.

Three days after, on the departure of Colonel Swift with dispatches to Washington, Totten was left as the Chief Engineer of Wilkinson's army. Here, at French Mills, on the Salmon river, he built and fortified the winter quarters of the left wing of the Northern Army, and then proceeded to do the same at Chateaugay Four-corners, for the right wing under Hampton.

Wilkinson after breaking up his cantonment at French Mills, took post at Plattsburg Feb. 15th, to open the campaign of 1814 against the British, who threatened the same operation as was attempted by Burgoyne in 1777, by Lake Champlain and the Hudson, thus to cut off New England, supposed to be disaffected, from the rest of the Union. To meet and frustrate such efforts, countervailing measures were adopted, Totten being sent to fortify a position near Rouse's Point, to prevent the British squadron at St. John's from getting into Lake Champlain; but, before the defenses could be built, 2,500 British troops were concentrated at La Cole Mill, south of Rouse's Point. Wilkinson, March 30th, moved with 4,000 men to dislodge the enemy from this strong stone structure. At first he was successful, but, having no breaching artillery and its garrison being reinforced, he withdrew, terminating with this inglorious affair his active military career.

Major-General George Izard succeeded Wilkinson on the Champlain frontier, Major Totten being his Chief Engineer. By the middle of June he had disposed his troops for a movement into Canada, both armed belligerents being eager for the fray.

Skirmishing along the border was of frequent occurrence, and 4,500 of our troops were at Champlain, within five miles of Canada; but already Napoleon was exiled to Elba, and Wellington's veterans, released from Spain, were arriving at Montreal, and soon after were pouring down the Sorel in overwhelming force for the contemplated invasion of our territory. At this critical moment, almost as if in aid of the enemy's design, Izard was ordered to the Niagara,



for which he departed with 4,000 troops, Aug. 29th, leaving Brig.-General Macomb, his successor, with the care of his sick, and scarce 1,200 effective men to defend Platt's Point and Cumberland Head, and to hold Provost's 14,000 veterans at bay. Macomb, till 1812 a Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineers, well knew how vital to our cause was the successful defense of Plattsburg, for that point passed, all was

open to the Hudson; hence he strained every muscle to increase his force with New York and Vermont volunteers, while Totten toiled day and night to complete his fortifications. These consisted of a strong redoubt and batteries on Cumberland Head;* Forts Brown, Moreau, and Scott, protecting the neck of the peninsula between the Saranac and Lake Champlain; and several block-houses and many batteries along the river and shores of Plattsburg bay. We do not propose here to detail our double victory which followed on the 11th of September when the bold Macdonough beat the superior British fleet, and the gallant Macomb, behind his entrenchments, defeated and compelled the retreat of Provost's veteran army of thrice his force.

* The fortifying of this position to prevent the enemy's entrance into Lake Champlain, was ordered by General Izard against the advice of the Secretary of War and the earnest protest of Major Totten, who strongly recommended the occupation of Rouse's Point, which, says Izard, July 12, 1814, to the War Department, "has been long an object of my attention. It is admirably situated for the establishment of a heavy battery, which would command the passage of the lake at its narrowest part; but there is not room for defensive works in its rear, and its immediate vicinity to the enemy's principal post, at La Cole (now surrounded by intrenchments), would make its occupation very hazardous. The question next lay between Point-aux-Roches and Cumberland Head. I have decided in favor of the latter." After the War of 1812-15 Colonel Totten, writing to General Armstrong August 8, 1838, on this subject, says: "There was ground enough in the rear of Rouse's Point for small works, and for such as would, with an adequate garrison, defend the position against great enterprises, and even a siege. Having no faith in the power of any works on Cumberland Head, capable of impeding or materially injuring a passing squadron, I felt bound in conscience to state my views to the General, *but though my opposition was earnest, it was in vain.* I do not now see, and never have supposed, that there was anything in the vicinity of La Cole Mill, or in the character of its garrison, to render the occupation of Rouse's Point hazardous to our army." The same views were expressed August 5, 1838, by General Swift, formerly Chief Engineer U. S. Army.

Thus ended the battle of Plattsburg, and the second invasion of the State of New York. In his official dispatch to the War Department giving an account of this signal victory, the commanding general "recommends to the particular notice of the government" eleven officers who had "distinguished themselves by their uncommon zeal and activity, and had been greatly instrumental in producing the happy and glorious results of the siege." Of these eleven, *three* were the officers of engineers—Totten the chief, and DeRussy and Trescot his assistants—all of whom were brevetted for their "gallant conduct at the battle of Plattsburg." After his skill and labors had given such eminent results to his country, Bvt. Lieut.-Colonel Totten joined General Izard on the Niagara, soon after the successful sortie from Fort Erie. This fort being of no further use to us, Totten, with the sanction of the general, mined it, and Nov. 5th laid it in ruins—one of the last acts of this War against Canada.

Totten's military experience, with his mathematical training at West Point admirably fitted one of his acute intellect for what was destined to be the great labor of his life—planning and constructing sea-coast fortifications.

During the Revolution some of our more important harbors had been fortified with feeble earthen works, and from that time till the close of the second war with Great Britain, many small, weak and ill-designed forts and batteries were built by foreign engineers in our service, of cheap and perishable materials. The only large casemated work was

Castle Williams, on the Montalembert system, built in 1807–10, in New York harbor.

A permanent Board of Engineers was created Nov. 16, 1816, General Bernard, the great constructer of the citadel of Antwerp under Napoleon, being at its head, with Colonel McRee and Lieut.-Colonel Totten members, to which was confided the labor of working out the fundamental principles and elaborating the projects for durable works to defend our entire sea-coast. The masterly reports of this board, most of them written by Totten, laid down the great principles of National Defense so forcibly and incontestibly that they have ever since been the safe guides to all succeeding boards; and, though often ably attacked, have stood firm against all assaults. Till 1838, when Totten became Chief Engineer of the Army, he continued most of his time on the Board of Engineers, though after 1825 he was also the constructer of Fort Adams, Newport harbor, R. I., the second work in area in the United States, and the first in its combination of the principles and details of the art of fortification. When this fort was commenced, little was known of building great structures in this country; hence he had to make numerous experiments to test the qualities and adaptabilities of almost every kind of material.

Besides these military works, he was often called upon to devise and direct harbor and river improvements, and other important civil constructions for the Government, States, Cities and Corporations; and, as Chief Engineer, was ex-officio Inspector of the

Military Academy, having charge of the general direction of the institution.

For twenty-six years he continued at the head of the Engineer Department, administering, with untiring devotion, spotless integrity, and signal ability, the varied details, the financial responsibilities, and the professional labors of that arm of service so essential to our national defense and internal development.

In the War with Mexico, General Scott summoned his early companion-in-arms, in whose judgment he had the most unbounded confidence, to aid him with his professional skill in the siege of Vera Cruz, which he directed with such signal ability that he was not only appointed one of the Commissioners for arranging the terms of its capitulation, but also was brevetted, March 29, 1847, a Brigadier-General, for his "gallant and meritorious conduct."

In addition to General Totten's multiplied military avocations, he was an active and most useful member of the Light House Board, from its organization in 1852; a Regent of the Smithsonian Institution from its establishment in 1846; a Corporator of the National Academy of Sciences, created in 1863; one of the Harbor Commissioners for the cities of New York and Boston; and a member of many scientific associations, to some of which he made valuable contributions.

He rose from the lowest to the highest grade in his branch of the army; was five times complimented by advance rank for meritorious and distinguished services; became a Brigadier-General by a special

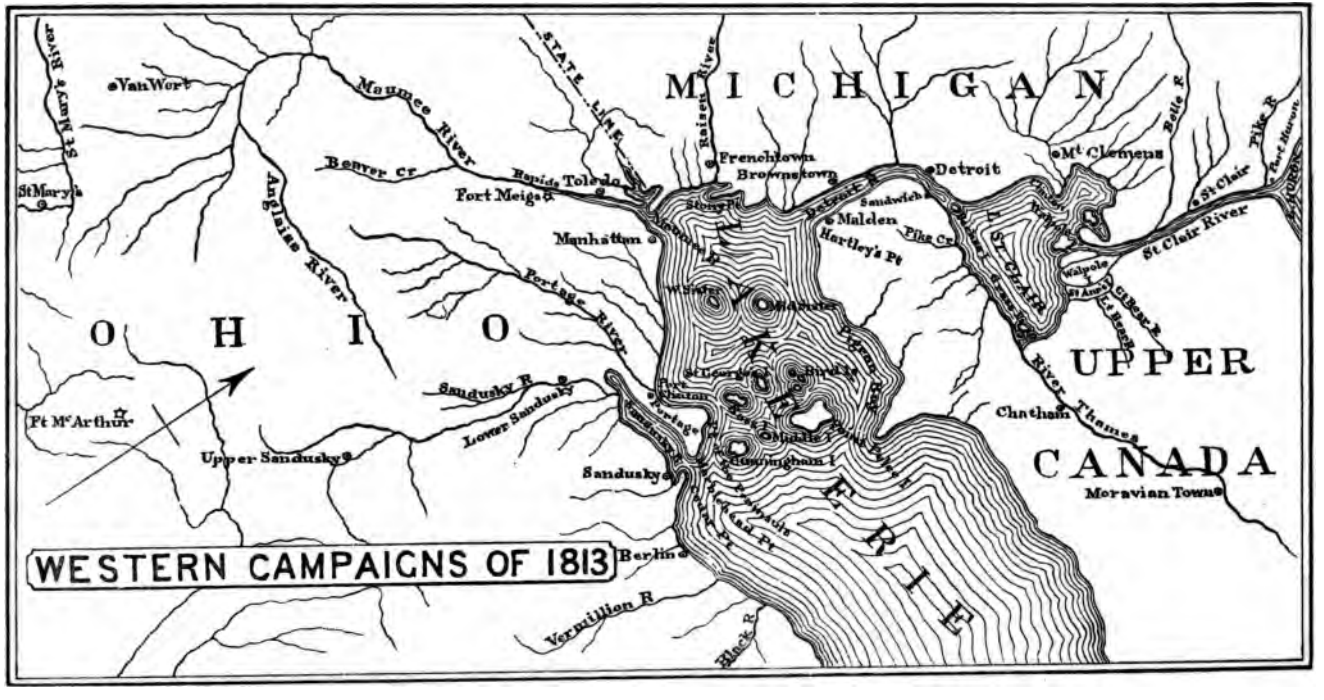
act of Congress in 1863, when the Topographical Corps was merged into the Corps of Engineers; after near three score years of "long, faithful, and eminent services," was brevetted a Major-General in the Army; and the next day, April 22, 1864, breathed his last in the City of Washington, terminating his illustrious career, at the advanced age of seventy-five.

General Totten, physically, mentally, and morally, was a remarkable man. Compactly built, with a strong, robust frame, a vigorous constitution exempt from most ailments of life, and with temperate and regular habits, his powers of endurance were astonishing. No elemental changes, no bodily privations, nor any amount of labor, seemed sensibly to affect him; and his equable disposition and serenity of thought prevented the disturbance of his even balance and protected him from polemic excitation. His intellect was thoroughly disciplined, system pervaded his daily life, and his perseverance never flagged till the goal of his efforts was attained. The constitution of his mind was remarkably sound, muscular, and of the Baconian order, following more the inductive than syllogystic methods. All his great and varied powers received their direction from common sense, for he was eminently practical—a thorough man of the world. From the highest he disdained not to descend to the lowest, and the next moment could pass from the microscopic to that which required the greatest amplitude of comprehension. Often would he leave the elaboration of the minutest contrivance at his drawing-table, perhaps to prepare a masterly report on national defense.

He devoured books—literary, scientific and profes. sional—though he "read not to contradict, nor to believe, but to weigh and consider;" hence he was accurately informed, an instructive talker, and a terse, vigorous and masculine writer, never sacrificing strength to polish. It was because he dug deep that he was able to pile high. Conservative in all his views, he was slow to adopt innovations; yet he was ever foremost to embrace all great professional improvements. With no controversial tendencies and few prejudices, he could weigh deliberately and receive truths as guests, not as enemies. His perceptive were equal to his reflective qualities, nothing, however minute, escaping his eagle eye. His judgment was as sound as his reason, and his almost Draconian sense of justice required of others the measure of right practised by himself. His self-control was amazing, no murmur escaping him under the severest trials of bereavement or injustice. Thoroughly subjugating his feelings, and disciplined to obedience, not even the persecutions of a corrupt superior, like Secretary Floyd, shook his immutable integrity, which no sophistry could swerve, no power bend, no blandishments veer, and no influence warp, for it was the pole-star of all his actions. But with all his sterner virtues, he possessed in an eminent degree, the graces of life. He had a delicate appreciation of music, was a connoisseur of the fine arts, could design and draw beautifully, was distinguished for urbanity of manner and genial social qualities, had the keenest sense of wit and humor, and above all, possessed that great moral excellence which

adorns the Christian soldier and gentleman. In fine, he was a polished, true and great man; a patriot in its broadest sense; and in an age of soldiers, like that of Louis XIV or Napoleon, he would have been awarded the highest military honors.

General Barnard, in his elaborate eulogy of General Totten, delivered before the National Academy of Sciences, says of him: "He was no trifler with the realities of life, who dallied with them for his pleasure, or who wielded them as instruments of ambition or self-interest. To him, as to all true men, the meaning of life was concentrated in one single word, DUTY. This 'chief end of man,' which is to glorify God by obedience to His laws in the use of the faculties He has bestowed, was his ruling principle—the celestial cynosure to which his eyes were ever directed, and from which no allurement of lower motives could divert it. Nor was his sense of duty of that frigid, repulsive nature which reduces the conduct of life to a formula, and, substituting rules for emotions, seems but a refined selfishness. He was warm and sympathetic, finding his chief happiness in the pleasures of domestic and social intercourse, but singularly susceptible to everything that ministers to innocent enjoyment. * * * * Gentle, kind and good; mild, modest and tolerant; wise, sagacious, shrewd and learned; yet simple and unpretending as a child—he died as he had lived, surrounded by hearts gushing with affection, and the object of respect and love of all with whom he had ever been associated."


MICHIGAN
OHIO
UPPER
CANADA
LAKE ERIE
WESTERN CAMPAIGNS OF 1813
STATE LINE
Maumee River
Raisin River
Detroit
Frenchtown
Brownstown
Fort Meigs
Rapids
Toledo
Beaver cr
Manhattan
Maldon
Hartley's Pt
Sandwich
Pike Cr
Mt Clemens
St Clair
St Clair River
Belle R
Pike R
Port Huron
Walpole
St Anne
Gilbert's
Chatham
River Thames
Meravian Towns
Portage River
Sandusky R
Lower Sandusky
Upper Sandusky
Sandusky
Portage
Bird I
Middle I
Cunningham I
Pt Clinton
Pt Pelee
Pt Pelee I
Pt Marblehead
Pt Lead Pt
Berlin
Vermilion R
Black R
Anglaise River
Beaver cr
St Mary's River
St Mary's
VanWert
Pt McArthur

CHAPTER THIRD.

WESTERN CAMPAIGNS OF 1813;

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF

LIEUT.-COLONEL ELEAZER D. WOOD.

FOILED in every attempt to invade Canada in 1812, and thrown upon the defensive within our own border, it was hoped that in future operations we would profit by past disasters. Our losses had been great in men, money and reputation; but infinitely the least loss was that of William Eustis, compelled by public indignation to resign from the head of the War Department. Major-General John Armstrong, who became the new Secretary of War, January 13, 1813, was a veteran of the Revolution, an officer of large experience, and a man of commanding intellect; yet he began his administration by repeating his predecessor's errors in directing movements against the enemy by isolated columns aimed at the least vital points of his power. The Campaign of 1813, though differing in its details and modified in after execution, was, in principle, essentially the same as the plan which had resulted in the wretched fiasco of 1812. The Northwestern, or Army of the Left, under Harrison, was, as before, to invade Canada by the Detroit Straits; the Army of the Centre, under Dearborn, instead of by the Niagara as in 1812, was to attack the enemy's ter-

ritory by blows at Kingston, York and Fort George on the Northern shore of Lake Ontario; while the Northeastern, or Army of the Right, under Hampton (later in the season) threatened a movement on Montreal from Lake Champlain. Subsequently, the Army of the Centre was ordered to descend the St. Lawrence river to co-operate in the capture of Montreal. Thus were our forces again scattered, over more than a thousand miles of frontier, without mutual support, and anew were doomed, from false strategy, to reap few laurels.

In this chapter we propose to limit ourselves to the operations of the Northwestern Army, of which Captain Wood was practically the Chief Engineer, his senior—Captain Gratiot—being most of his time absent on other duty or too sick for active service; and, for the better understanding of the Western Campaigns of 1813, we must dwell a little on preceding events which transpired in the territory north of the Ohio.

Mutterings of the coming storm of war, had been heard for years, among the Indian tribes of the Northwest under the bold leadership of Tecumseh and his wily brother—the Prophet—who were dissatisfied with the Treaties of Greenville and Fort Wayne. Instigated to hostilities by British emmissaries, the latter chief had unsuccessfully attacked Governor Harrison at Tippecanoe, Nov. 7, 1811, frustrating for a time the hopes of the hostile tribes. Had we promptly followed up this vigorous blow all would have been well, and the after horrors of the tomahawk and scalping-knife been averted; but

Secretary Eustis, attempting to soothe savages with soft words, was laughed at for his credulity, our mistaken forbearance was interpreted as weakness, and Tecumseh's alliance with the British was ensured. This bold chief again in arms, and aided by the moral influence of the capture of Mackinaw, the destruction of the garrison at Fort Dearborn, and the surrender of Detroit, was soon enabled to array numerous tribes against us under command of Colonel Proctor of the British army, at heart a more inhuman savage than himself. Proctor, with his allies again on the war-path, determined immediately to reduce Forts Wayne and Harrison; but both of these strong stockades resisted all assaults till relieved by the great uprising of the Western people who, in hordes and from all ranks of society, with patriotic ardor volunteered to avenge the past disasters to our arms, exterminate the brutal savages, and expel their British allies from the soil of the Republic. Numbers and enthusiasm, however, were weak antagonists to encounter the organization and discipline of European regulars and the wily warfare of the warriors of the wilderness.

In a short time, over 10,000 ill-equipped and inexperienced volunteers, composed of this excellent raw material, with a few regulars of our army, were embodied under the command of Governor Harrison, who had been commissioned Brevet Major-General of Kentucky Militia; and, Sept. 17, 1812, as a Brigadier-General of the United States Army, was placed over his senior—General Winchester—because of his former services and great popularity in the West.

Harrison's orders from the War Department were to provide for the security of the Western frontier; to retake Michigan Territory; and, with a view to the conquest of Upper Canada, to penetrate that country as far as the force under his command would justify him to proceed. He was advised that every exertion was making to furnish him with a train of artillery from Pittsburgh and with all other necessary supplies.

At once abandoning his impracticable project of capturing Detroit by a *coup-de-main* with mounted troops, Harrison digested a new plan of campaign. To support his army and better to protect the frontier, he established his base of operations along the edge of the swampy district, extending from St. Mary's, by Fort McArthur, to Upper Sandusky in Ohio, which three places were to be the principal points of concentration of troops and depots of supplies preparatory to a general advance by columns marching, from each of these localities, upon the Rapids of the Maumee (now Perrysburg), which was to be the first *objective* of the campaign. The left column, under General Winchester, was composed of the Kentucky militia and his few regulars; that of the centre, General Tupper commanding, consisted of 1,200 Ohio militia and 800 mounted infantry; while the column of the right, to be made up of brigades from Pennsylvania, Virginia and Ohio, led by General Harrison in person, was to approach its object by way of Lower Sandusky.

A more gallant army than Harrison's never went to battle; but seldom was discomfiture more complete

or fatal than was theirs. While Harrison with the right wing was waiting for supplies at Sandusky and Tupper making absurd movements with the centre column, Winchester, commanding the left, was induced to detach Colonels Lewis and Allen, of Kentucky, to advance beyond the reach of prompt support, for the protection of Frenchtown (now Monroe, Michigan) on the River Raisin, a small stream emptying into the western end of Lake Erie. Our decided victory at this place over Major Reynold's combined British and Indian force, Jan. 18, 1813, produced a degree of most unfortunate confidence. As soon as the news of our success was known at the Rapids, all were eager to rush forward to support and share the glory of their comrades. Winchester, with a small re-enforcement of but 250 men, reached Frenchtown on the 20th, but, failing to entrench his position, his scattered forces were surprised and attacked, on the 22d, by the whole of Proctor's army, his detachment defeated, himself captured, and, by a base strategem, all the heroic survivors were induced to conditionally surrender. The terms of the capitulation were barbarously violated by the British commander, the prisoners being treated with the most brutal inhumanity; the dead, denied sepulture, scalped, and left to be devoured by the hogs and dogs of the village; while the powerless wounded were abandoned to the "surgery" of the savages, who, with knife, torch, and tomahawk tortured them to death. And will it be credited that the monster, responsible for all this, was an officer of a Christian nation and was pro-

moted to the honorable rank of Brigadier-General for his services in this butchery of a trusting foe! "What a contrast," says M'Afee, "between this base perfidy of the British *officers*, in exposing their prisoners to massacre, after *stipulating* to protect them; and the noble humanity of the American *tars* [after Perry's victory on Lake Erie] in sacrificing their own lives, to save their foes who had surrendered *unconditionally*."

With the massacre of the River Raisin was virtually terminated this fruitless winter campaign of 1812–13, by which we had gained no lost ground, effaced no disgrace to our arms, and accomplished nothing, while time and money were wasted and precious lives and reputation sacrificed.

Harrison, with his raw levies, doubtless labored hard to defend the extensive frontier, to contend against a formidable foe, and to overcome the many obstacles which nature interposed; yet, all these hindrances do not justify his violation of the principles of strategy. Perhaps he was not to blame for the first plan of campaign, suggested by the government while that organizer of failures—William Eustis—was at the head of the War Department. When, on the 30th of September, he took command at St. Mary's, the rainy season was fast approaching, and nothing was ready for an autumnal advance; hence he had no choice but to prepare for operations in the spring, or attempt a winter campaign—always difficult and seldom successful. Had Harrison been as bold as he was brave, he would have chosen the former and not have adopted the latter, having "a

complete *carte blanche*" to conduct the war as he saw fit. In extenuation of his mistake, he wrote, Jan. 4, 1813, to the War Department: "The wishes of the government, to recover the ground which had been lost and to conquer Upper Canada, were, however, expressed in such strong terms, and the funds which were placed at my disposal were declared to be so ample, if not unlimited, that I did not consider myself authorized to adopt the alternative of delay from any other motive than that of the safety of the army."

But the whole problem of Northwestern operations had changed since Winchester had been ordered to support Hull, and Harrison to defend Indiana and Illinois against hostile Indians. Now Detroit and Michigan Territory were in possession of the enemy; we had lost most of our western frontier posts and settlements; the savage tribes, north of the Ohio, were in open hostility; till November nothing but a few raids upon Indian camps had been effected; the weather was cold and the rainy season had set in; land transportation through the swamps was almost impracticable; deficient food and clothing were working their baneful effects upon the health and spirits of the troops; supplies and munitions of war were far in the rear; bad beef, hickory roots, elm bark, and beech nuts were often the substitutes for good rations; and, withal, the troops were without efficient organization, proper instruction, or military discipline. Knowing full well all these disadvantages under which he labored, Harrison persisted in undertaking a winter campaign against an active

enemy, in front, familiar with the wilderness; with cold, storms and all the elements opposed to him; and numerous mouths to feed without the possibility of transporting sufficient supplies except at enormous cost in money, men and animals. Besides, he could not have forgotten that General Wayne's army in 1793, after a whole summer's preparation, had not been able to advance more than seventy miles from the Ohio, and had then been ordered, by the prudent President Washington, into winter quarters, at, according to Harrison's own statement, "the very season when his own arrangements were *beginning*." Having, however, decided to attempt this crusade against the enemy and the elements, as a soldier he was bound to conduct his operations according to established military principles. The well-known maxims of war require the selection, if possible, of a single and of the shortest line of operation; that when multiplied lines are a necessity, they should be within mutual supporting distance; that isolated columns should have a place of concentration out of reach of the enemy; and that the objective point, when attained, should be decisive of the campaign. Certainly Harrison did not conform to these necessary rules of warfare. Instead of following Hull's route, which was the safest and most direct line of operation, his army marched in three columns, separated by from thirty to fifty miles of impassable swamps and trackless wilderness; the Maumee Rapids, his point of concentration, was within less than sixty miles of the enemy's whole force; and hence it was in Proctor's power with his entire army, rapidly and in

succession, to strike each of our columns before reaching their point of junction, thus destroying Harrison's army in detail without any risk to himself.

Winchester's advance to the River Raisin, though made from the best and most urgent motives, was a still greater fault, Frenchtown being within eighteen miles of the enemy's headquarters at Malden, while it was more than double that distance to the Maumee Rapids, the nearest point of support, and about one hundred miles on an average from the other corps of the American Army; hence the possibility of re-enforcing the left wing, against any speedy movement of the enemy, was chimerical. The first news of this advance, says Captain Wood, "for a moment paralyzed the army, or at least the thinking part of it, for no one could imagine that it was possible for him to be guilty of such a hazardous step. General Harrison was astonished at the imprudence and inconsistency of such a measure, which, if carried into execution, could be viewed in no other light than as attended with certain and inevitable destruction to the left wing. Nor was it a difficult matter for any one to foresee and predict the terrible consequences which were sure to mark the result of a scheme no less rash in its conception than hazardous in its execution." He continues, after speaking of the battle of Frenchtown and massacre of the River Raisin: "Thus was there a corps of 1,000 men, the élite of the army, totally sacrificed in the most wanton manner possible; and that too, without the slightest benefit to their country or posterity. With only one-third or one-fourth of the force destined for

that service; destitute of artillery; of engineers; of men who had ever seen or heard the least of an enemy; and with but a very inadequate supply of ammunition; how he could have entertained the most distant hope of success, or what right he had to presume to claim it, is to me one of the strangest things in the world. An adept in the art of war is alone authorized to deviate from the ordinary and established rules, by which that art for a great length of time has been usefully and successfully applied. Winchester was destitute of every means of supporting his corps long at the River Raisin, was in the very jaws of the enemy, and beyond the reach of succor. He who fights with such flimsy pretensions to victory, will always be beaten, and eternally ought to be."

This is doubtless a just criticism upon the fatuity of Winchester; but it does not excuse Harrison, for he alone was responsible for the conduct of the whole army, and should, in the most positive manner, have controlled Winchester's movements, for his plea that he always "considered him rather in the light of an associate in command, than an inferior" will not suffice. As Napoleon, in 1776, told the French Directory which, jealous of his success, had proposed to divide the army of Italy: "It was better to have the whole commanded by *one inferior* general, like Killerman, than by *two superior* ones, like himself."

Harrison, to shirk responsibility, as is customary with weak men, after the disaster of the Raisin, called a council of war at the Rapids. As Councils

proverbially never fight, it was resolved to abandon the camp on the Maumee, destroy a large quantity of supplies collected there at enormous cost and labor, and retreat eighteen miles to Portage river—a retrograde movement altogether unnecessary in the actual state of affairs, as subsequent events proved. Early in February, 1813, he advanced again to the Rapids, the most eligible position to cover the frontier and threaten Detroit and the enemy's headquarters at Malden. On the 9th he sent, through deep snow, a detachment against some plundering Indians, which, after a fruitless chase, soon returned. Again, March 2d, he sent another detachment to burn the British fleet frozen up near Malden; but the operation was frustrated in consequence of Lake Erie being partially open and no bridge of ice across Detroit straits. These unsuccessful expeditions closed this disastrous campaign, which had been prosecuted at incalculable expense to the government, with little credit to our arms, and involved both officers and men, little inured to war,* in the greatest trials and privations.

* The waste of money was enormous. The flour for Harrison's army was said to have cost $100 per barrel. The immense distances, without roads through tangled swamps and almost trackless wildernesses, could only be traversed by thousands of pack-horses, each of which could carry but half a barrel of provisions, and must be attended by trains of other horses with forage for those laden with provisions. Few horses survived more than one trip; many sank under one. Of 4,000 pack-horses to supply the Northwestern Army, scarce 800 survived till the spring of 1813. Multiplied incidental, but inevitable charges, were of frightful amount. Large quantities of flour were buried in mud and snow, from inability to carry it any farther, and much was damaged when it reached its final destination. Two-thirds of that deposited at Fort Meigs was spoiled and unfit for use. Fluctuations and increase of prices were so great that many contractors were ruined,

Eleazer Derby Wood, practically the Chief Engineer of the Northwestern Army, was born, December, 1783, at Lunenburg, Mass. He was of brave New England stock. Two of his brothers, in the defense of Plattsburg Sept. 11, 1813, were among the last to retire before the enemy, across the Saranac, on the naked string-pieces, the plank-covering having already been taken up to prevent the British passing in force. While crossing, one of the brothers caught a wounded man as he was falling into the stream, and carried him safely within our intrenchments. Another brother, while performing his duties as a Custom-House officer, was captured July 30, 1813, in his own boat on Lake Champlain, carried to Canada, and for over six months was confined as a prisoner of war near Quebec.

Except that young Wood commenced the study of medicine at Alburg, Vermont, we know little of his early history before going, May 17, 1805, to West Point. While a Cadet he was noted for his soldierly qualities, rigid compliance with regulations, devotion to study, and fondness for the sciences, in which he displayed such proficiency that he was at times detailed for engineer duty in New York Harbor. He was graduated from the Military Academy and promoted, Oct. 30, 1806, to be a Second Lieutenant of Engineers in the U. S. Army. He was immediately placed on duty with Colonel Williams, the

and it became necessary to purchase, at exorbitant rates, of other persons when disappointed of regular supplies by contractors.

The waste of life was also very great from malaria, privations, exposure, excessive fatigue, and the want of competent surgeons, instruments and medicines. Our hospitals did more for the enemy than our arms.

Chief Engineer, to assist in the construction of the defenses of Governor's Island, New York Harbor. In the winter of 1807–8, he was occupied in his professional studies at West Point, the headquarters of the Corps of Engineers, in which he became a First Lieutenant, Feb. 23, 1808. Soon after, he was ordered to Norfolk, Va., to aid in fortifying its harbor, where he remained until 1810, when he again returned to West Point, becoming then the Military Agent of the post till 1812. From here he was ordered to the charge of the defenses of New London Harbor, Conn., and to erect a battery at Sag Harbor, Long Island, N. Y.

In November, after Hull's surrender of Detroit, Wood received his much-coveted orders for service, "where war is most active." He had long felt the great wrongs suffered by our country, and deeply deprecated the apathy of the nation in not resisting continued insults and British oppression. In writing to his sister, November 30, 1812, he says: "I have spent eight years [including his cadetship] in the army for the purpose of preparing myself to render my country a service. * * * The period has now arrived when I am to be tested as a soldier. If I prove to be one and fortunate, it will no doubt be extremely pleasing and gratifying to you all. *If I shall fall in the present conflict*, you must not grieve nor mourn, but rejoice that you had a brother to lose for the maintenance and preservation of those sacred rights for which our Revolutionary Patriots bled and fell." Noble man! and seer of his own glorious end!

For causes before stated, though assigned as an assistant to Captain Gratiot, he became virtually the Chief Engineer of the Northwestern Army. His Journal, given entire in Chapter IX., shows the important services upon which he was constantly engaged, how indispensable he was to the Commanding General, and that in his knowledge of the art of war he had no superior in that army. The few extracts we have given from this journal evince the comprehensiveness of Wood's mind, his remarkably mature judgment, and his unusual familiarity with every detail of the campaign.

Harrison at the Maumee Rapids, in the Spring of 1813, was less than sixty miles from Proctor at Malden; but the latter, for every offensive movement, had, when the ice disappeared, the great advantage of possessing naval means for crossing Lake Erie or ascending the Maumee River. Harrison, in making any advance, must march by land, which involved taking pretty much the same route as Hull followed in 1812, which, besides being very circuitous, exposed his communications, with his base at the Rapids, to be cut at any moment by the enemy quickly throwing his whole force from Malden across the Detroit Straits. Under these circumstances nothing seemed feasible but to intrench his army till Captain Perry's Fleet, about to be built at Presque Isle (Erie Harbor, Penn.), should be completed, and the naval control of the lake be secured. While Harrison occupied his time in accumulating provisions, and providing garrisons for isolated posts, Wood, with the 1,800 remaining troops, set to work

fortifying a strong position on the right bank of the Maumee (nearly opposite Wayne's battle-ground of August 20, 1794) which was about one hundred feet above the river and completely commanded it. This excellent position, says Wood, "was judiciously chosen by General Harrison and Captain Gratiot, on the 3d and 4th of February, 1813." This camp, subsequently called Fort Meigs, after the Governor of Ohio, had a perimeter of 2,500 yards, and enclosed about eight acres. Except at intervals, left for batteries and block-houses, the whole was to be palisaded with twelve inch timber sunk three feet in the ground and rising above to the height of twelve feet. Each working party was assigned its allotted task, and all labored with laudable zeal to complete their portion of the defenses as quickly as possible. To cut and plant nearly a mile and a half of palisades; build all the store-houses and magazines for the army supplies; to put up eight block-houses of double timber; and erect four large elevated batteries—was no ordinary undertaking, to say nothing of other harassing fatigue duties and the daily anxieties and privations of camp life. "Besides," says Captain Wood, "an immense deal of labor was likewise required in excavating ditches, making abatis, and clearing a width of 300 yards of oak and beech forest all around the camp; and the whole was to be done at a time when the weather was inclement, and the ground so hard that it could scarcely be opened with the mattock and pickaxe. But in the use of the axe, mattock and spade consisted the chief military knowledge of our army; and even that knowledge, however trifling it

may be supposed by some, is of the utmost importance in many situations, and in ours was the salvation of the army. So we fell to work, heard nothing of the enemy, and endeavored to bury ourselves as soon as possible."

Soon after this auspicious commencement of Fort Meigs, General Harrison was called to Cincinnati, by sickness in his family, and to push forward recruits for his army; while, at the same time, Captain Wood was required at Sandusky to supervise defensive works for that post, where considerable supplies had been accumulated for ulterior operations within easy reach of Lake Erie. Colonel Leftwich, who temporarily succeeded to the command of Fort Meigs, thinking only of how soon he and his Virginia militia would return home, stopped all work on the stockade, regardless of the exposure of the stores and safety of the troops, and actually burned the picketing for fuel, though a dense forest was close at hand. When Captain Wood returned, he found his fortifications nearly destroyed, the garrison exposed to the most inclement weather, and all the costly stores an easy prey to the enemy. Well might he call Leftwich, "an old phlegmatic Dutchman, who was not even fit for a pack-horse master, much less to be entrusted with such an important command."

Wood anew hurried forward, with unabated activity, his Sisyphus task of replacing his destroyed intrenchments, at that time an almost Herculean labor, the garrison being greatly reduced by expirations of enlistments. But not a moment was to be

lost now that the navigation of the lake and river was open for any meditated attack from the British and their savage allies under Proctor, who, elated by his past sanguinary success at Frenchtown, saw, in the future, visions of victory, personal glory, and official promotion. A report, at this time, was put in circulation that the whole of the Northwestern Army had been captured and were on their way to Montreal as prisoners of war. In writing, April 10, 1813, from Fort Meigs of this report, Captain Wood says to his brother: "So far as respects our being on our way to Montreal, is correct; but we take our time and choose our route. No, brother, the English have not yet got the Northwestern Army, and, what is more, they will never get it until at least 1,000 or 1,500 of them should be willing to lie down contented in the Bed of Honour, which I don't think they will be solicitous of doing."

General Harrison, with about 300 men, which were all that could be spared from the other posts, arrived, April 12, at the Rapids, everything indicating a speedy attack on Fort Meigs. Captain Wood had toiled day and night, until, says he, "we are intrenched up to our teeth," to prepare for the coming siege of the weakly garrisoned work from which the bad roads and swollen streams had kept back the expected re-inforcements under General Green Clay. The latter's advance fortunately reached the fort before the arrival of the enemy, who did not appear in force till the 28th of April, when the British began to land with their artillery on the left bank of the Maumee, their Indian allies going to the

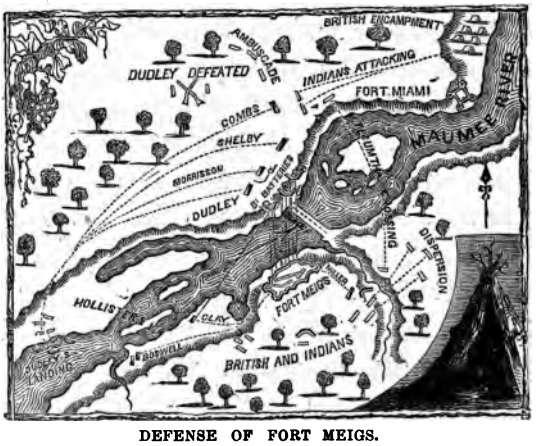
right bank, thus completely investing the fort. Proctor established his main camp two miles below the Rapids, and constructed one mortar and two gun batteries, nearly opposite to the fort, on the high bank of the river about 300 yards from its north shore, which were completed, and opened their fire on the 1st of May. In the meantime, Harrison had issued a stirring order to the garrison; our guns greatly impeded the enemy's operations, Captain Gratiot rising from a sick bed to take charge of a battery; while the indefatigable Wood, with the whole army under his control, with incredible rapidity, pushed forward the defenses, mid dark nights, pouring rains, and incessant annoyance from Indian bullets and British grape and shells. As the enemy's batteries commanded the fort, Wood constructed on the high ground, through its middle, a *traverse* of earth, nearly a thousand feet long, twenty in width at base, and twelve feet high. What was the astonishment of the British engineer when he saw this vast shield of earth, exposed to view by the removal of our tents to the other side of the traverse! Instead of a doomed camp, from which Proctor had boasted he would soon "smoke out the Yankees," he found how futile were all the efforts of his greatly superior force in men, ordnance and gun-boats—all of which had kept up an incessant fire upon Fort Meigs. For five days their cannonading and bombarding continued, though producing slight injury to our defenses and garrison, while the American batteries replied with great effect. However, the scarcity of ammunition and the uncertainty of the pos-

sible duration of the siege, compelled the economizing of our artillery discharges, and often obliged us to return the enemy's shot from our own guns. Said Wood, "with plenty of ammunition we should have blown John Bull from the Miami." Proctor, now seeing that his direct fire could not effect his purpose, on the 2d, under cover of his gun boats, sent a force of British and Indians to establish a battery of twelve pounders on the right bank of the Maumee, to take the fort in flank and reverse; all of which the divining Wood had anticipated, and provided against by the erection of cross-traverses.

At last General Green Clay's expected 1,200 Kentucky militia were, on the morning of the 5th, nearing the Rapids in eighteen boats. Instead of being allowed to form an immediate junction with the garrison, these troops were ordered to debark above the fort, two-thirds on the left bank, "to turn and take the British batteries there, spike the cannon, cut down the gun-carriages, and regain their boats as speedily as possible;" while, simultaneously with this movement, "the remainder of the brigade should land on the opposite shore, fight its way through the Indians into the camp, and thus favor a *sortie* to be made by the garrison upon the British battery on the right bank."

This plan had decided merits; but its execution was dependent upon brave but undisciplined militia, untrained company officers, and all without military experience or knowledge of the ground to be traversed. Colonel Dudley, in command on the north bank, after safely landing, formed his detach-

ment in three columns, with skirmishers covering his left flank; marched a mile and a half unobserved through the woods; gallantly fell upon the British batteries; captured their heavy guns then playing upon Fort Meigs; spiked eleven, without losing a man; and pulled down the British flag amid wild shouts from the beleaguered fort. Had Dudley obeyed his orders and returned to his boats, the main object of the expedition would have been



DEFENSE OF FORT MEIGS.

happily accomplished; but, unfortunately, the excessive ardor of the victors, who had announced their presence near the batteries by loud Kentucky yells, involved them, while indiscreetly going to the rescue of some of their comrades, in a bush fight with a few straggling Indians. These savages contrived to amuse them until Proctor had time to completely cut off their retreat, and destroy more than three-fourths of the whole command in its precipitate and disorderly rout.

While these tragic scenes were transpiring on the left bank of the Maumee, the remainder of Green's Kentuckians succeeded, after various mishaps, in fighting their way to the fort with trifling loss against British artillery and Indian rifles. Here they were met by a sortie of volunteers and a few regulars, the united force falling upon and utterly routing their dusky foes.

Colonel Miller, with a detachment of 350, composed of the 17th and 19th regulars with a few volunteers and militia, now sallied from Fort Meigs; furiously attacked the motley enemy 850 strong; drove them from the right bank battery at the point of the bayonet; spiked all their guns; and dispersed them in confusion to the woods and a ravine in rear. Though Miller lost some brave men, he accomplished his object and brought in 43 prisoners as trophies of his hard won victory.

Proctor now virtually abandoned the siege of Fort Meigs. Though he had defeated Dudley and regained his batteries on the left bank, he had been so roughly handled that eventual success was out of the question. His Indian allies were deserting him; the Canadian militia were turning homeward; no serious impression had been made on the fort; his investment had failed to keep out re-enforcements and supplies; the news of General Pike's capture of York had reached the British camp; and nothing now remained to save his army but a retreat to Malden. To cover this movement and save his heavy guns, which he could not embark on the boats till a change of wind, he, with his usual effrontery,

resorted to the same device employed against Hull and Winchester—affected humanity, ridiculous menaces, and insolent demands. Accordingly he sent Major Chambers, on the evening of the 5th, to demand the immediate surrender of the fort and army as "the only means left for saving the latter from the tomahawks and scalping-knives of the savages." Harrison, seeing through the enemy's finesse, and knowing Proctor's practice in humanity at the River Raisin, admonished the British general that, if he repeated his folly, he should regard it as a designed insult. Changing his tactics, Proctor, to gain time to embark his artillery, now made a proposal for an exchange of prisoners by which he delayed matters till the morning of the 9th, when, the wind having shifted, the British moved off with nearly everything except a few cannon-balls.

The whole force of the enemy at the siege, or rather investment, was about 600 regulars, 800 Canadian militia, and 1,800 Indians; while ours did not exceed 1,200 for the defense of a work designed for a garrison of more than double that number.

Proctor, in his retreat, left on the banks of the Maumee a record of infamy only paralleled by the atrocities in the massacre of the Raisin. Captain Wood and others have testified that on the surrender of Dudley's command the prisoners were marched down to Fort Miami and then, under the eye of Proctor and his officers, the Indians, who had already plundered them and murdered many on the way, were allowed to shoot, tomahawk, and scalp more than twenty of these defenseless prisoners, all of

whom would have been despatched in the same manner had not the butchery been stopped by Tecumseh, a less brutal biped-bloodhound than the commanding general of the army of a civilized Christian nation.

General Harrison, in his official despatch of May 9, 1813, to the War Department, after commending the conduct of commandants of corps in the operations at Fort Meigs, says: "Captain Gratiot of the Engineers, having been for a long time much indisposed, the task of fortifying the post devolved on Captain Wood. It could not have been placed in better hands. Permit me to recommend him to the President, and to assure you that any mark of his approbation bestowed on Captain Wood, would be highly gratifying to the whole of the troops who witnessed his arduous exertions." On this recommendation of his commanding general, Wood was brevetted, May 6, 1813, a Major "for distinguished services in the Defense of Fort Meigs." In his order of the day to his command, Harrison further says: "Where merit was so general, indeed almost universal, it is difficult to discriminate. The General cannot, however, omit to mention the names of those whose situation gave them an opportunity of being more particularly useful. From the long illness of Captain Gratiot, of the Corps of Engineers, the arduous and important duties of fortifying the camp devolved on Captain Wood, of that corps. In assigning to him the first palm of merit, as far as relates to the transactions within the works, the General is convinced his decision will be awarded by every individual in the

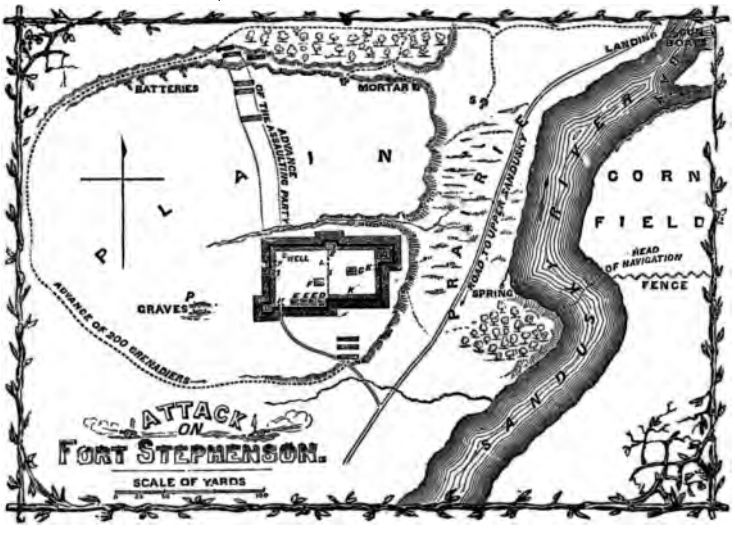
camp who witnessed his indefatigable exertions, his consummate skill in providing for the safety of every point, and in foiling any attempt of the enemy, and his undaunted bravery in the performance of his duty in the most exposed situations. An unfortunate wound in the commencement of the siege deprived the General, after that time, of the able services of Major Stoddard of the artillery, whose zeal and talents had been eminently useful. Captain Gratiot, in the remission of severe illness, took charge of a battery, and managed it with ability and effect."

The retreat of Proctor relieving Harrison of all immediate apprehension for the safety of Fort Meigs, he left General Clay in command of the work and started for Lower Sandusky to provide for its better protection, and then proceeded to the interior to secure the Erie frontier against British and Indian raids.

While Harrison was thus engaged, Proctor was not idle, for he knew Perry's progress in building and equipping his fleet at Presque Isle, and that inaction was fatal to his control over his Indian allies. Hence he meditated a new demonstration against Fort Meigs, which he hoped to carry by assault. On leaving Malden, for this purpose, his immense body of Indians were divided into three commands, respectively under Tecumseh, Dixon, and Round Head. Proctor, on reaching Fort Meigs, on the 25th of July, and seeing the formidable preparations to receive him, abandoned the idea of storming the work. His substituted design was, with his British troops, to

menace the work in front; and to send the Indians to the wood in the rear of the fort, there by firing and yells to deceive General Clay into the belief of a battle being waged with the expected re-enforcements and thus decoy him into sallying with his raw militia to their rescue; or else Harrison, hurrying to the relief of the garrison, on his march would fall into an ambuscade prepared by the savages for his destruction. The Indians, failing to deceive either Harrison or Clay, in a few days became impatient, and their rations falling short, Proctor, on the 28th, raised his camp, sent back part of his Indian allies, and with the remainder and his British regulars, hastened to attack Lower Sandusky, defended by a garrison not exceeding 160 men, in a weak stockade redoubt, armed with a single worn out six-pounder iron gun. Fortunately the work was commanded by the very young but brave Major Croghan, who had disregarded Harrison's order to abandon the redoubt, "should the enemy approach in force and with cannon," well knowing that the remorseless savages were in his rear, and that he had less to fear from the fortune of war than from a British attack in front. While landing his artillery and arranging his gun-boats, Proctor demanded the surrender of Fort Stephenson (now Fremont, Ohio), accompanied with the usual menaces of Indian massacre in case of refusal. Croghan was not to be intimidated into a betrayal of his trust, whereon the enemy's fire was opened upon him, and continued without interruption during the whole night of August 1, 1813. At dawn the next morning, a battery was planted within 250

yards of the Fort upon the northwest angle of which the whole fire was concentrated till 4 P. M., when the meditated real attack was fully developed; at the same time two feints were made towards the southern angle. Major Croghan promptly hastened to strengthen the menaced angle with bags of sand and sacks of flour. Hardly had he completed this work when the enemy, under cover of the smoke of their guns, rushed to within twenty paces of the pickets,



where a well-directed volley from the garrison staggered the assailants. The storming party, quickly rallying, descended into the ditch, when the head of the column, only thirty feet distant, was completely crushed by the heavy discharge of slugs and grape from Croghan's only gun, till then masked from view. Few in the ditch escaped the carnage, while a well-aimed discharge of rifles completed the work

of destruction of the supporting column. The few survivors beat a precipitate retreat, and thus was the contest ended between our 160 heroes, and the allied enemy of 500 British regulars and 800 savages. Proctor's loss being about 150, and having no hopes of capturing the fort, he immediately returned to Malden, with all he could collect of his fugitive forces.

It was now more than a year since the declaration of war, yet we were on the defensive far in the interior of the Northwest. We had lost much territory, and few gleams of victory by land lightened up the general gloom caused by our many discomfitures and the wretched mismanagement of the war. Within the same time, the gallant navy had won unfading laurels, and to its crown of glory was soon to be added Perry's brilliant victory over the British fleet, giving us, Sept. 10, 1813 the naval supremacy on Lake Erie. This was not only a grand triumph for that sister arm of service, but it enabled the Northwestern army at once to invade Canada and put to flight the enemy which so long had baffled the efforts of Hull and Harrison.

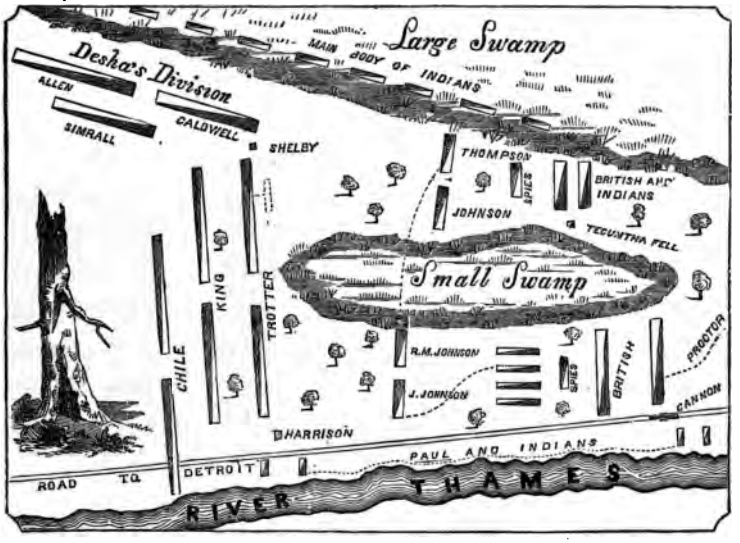
A new invasion of Canada was now meditated for which a force of more than 7,000 regulars and militia had, by the 15th of September, assembled on the southern shore of Lake Erie; and Perry's success had already removed all obstacles to a movement on Malden. Accordingly, the embarkation of the army, upon Perry's fleet and the boats prepared by Major Jesup at Cleveland, was commenced on the 20th; and its landing, Major Wood having charge

of the artillery, was safely effected in battle order on the 27th, at Hartley's Point on the Canada shore, three or four miles below Malden.* The cowardly Proctor, fearing Kentucky retribution for his barbarity, with the energy of despair had already precipitately fled northward with all the booty he could carry, after burning the public stores, magazines, barracks, navy yard, and the fertile fields about Malden. In vain did the more noble Tecumseh remonstrate against this unmanly flight from overrated danger. On the morning after taking possession of Malden, Harrison eagerly commenced the pursuit of the enemy; the baggage, provisions and ammunition followed in boats and vessels by the Detroit river; Colonel Johnson's cavalry reached Detroit on the 30th; and, October 4th, the united force of 3,000 men reached Chatham on the Thames river. Here a skirmish took place for the possession of a bridge, Wood, still in command of the artillery, having fortunately driven off the savages by a few well-directed shots before any serious damage was done to the structure.

Proctor, finding escape impossible, goaded to fight by Tecumseh's reproaches, and strong in everything but courage, at last, on the 5th, stood at bay near Moravian Town. He drew up his army in battle order at a well-chosen position in an open wood, his left resting on the high, precipitous bank of the Thames, and his right on an impassible swamp

* The rough draft of the order for landing and marching up Detroit river is among Wood's papers, but whether prepared by him is uncertain though it is in his handwriting.

nearly parallel to and about 500 yards from the river, while a narrow marsh divided his battle-field into nearly equal parts. The British regulars, about 800, in two lines, with the artillery commanding the river road, occupied the space between the Thames and the little marsh; while the Indians, 1,200 strong, were posted between the small and large swamps and along the margin of the latter, to sweep the



BATTLE OF THE THAMES.

ground over which Harrison must pass to attack Proctor's front. The American order of battle was in two lines, with a third in reserve, parallel to the enemy's front; while Desha's division, thrown back, *en potence*, nearly at right angles to our front, covered the left flank from any attack of the Indians posted on the edge of the great swamp. When every preparation for attack was completed, Major

Wood, who had just returned from a close reconnoissance of the enemy's position, informed General Harrison that the British lines were drawn up with intervals between the files, which led to the brilliant conception of ordering Johnson's mounted regiment forward to the attack, the first battalion moving against the British regulars while the second, under the Colonel, encountered the Indians between the two swamps. Moving slowly through the woods, after receiving two British volleys, and the latter one from the Indians, almost in their faces, both boldly charged. The British first line, and then the second, was broken and scattered in all directions, and a destructive fire being poured upon the rear of the shattered lines, they, cravenly crying for quarter, threw down their arms, and in less than five minutes, all, except Proctor and a few fugitives, were made prisoners. Against Tecumseh the fight raged longer and more furiously, the Kentuckians dismounting in the thick woods and engaging the Indians in a hand to hand encounter with the battle cry of "Remember the River Raisin." Victory on our left seemed for a moment doubtful, when a regiment of infantry with their deadly rifles, turned the scale, the savages being put to flight, but fighting as they fled. The number of killed and wounded in this short, sharp and decisive battle was comparatively small; but the trophies of victory were great—six cannon, 5,000 small arms, 600 prisoners, valuable spoils, recovery of Michigan Territory, peace and industry restored to our exposed frontier, the utter rout of the British army, and the dissolution of the In-

dian alliance, Tecumseh, their brave and distinguished leader, being slain.

Tecumseh was about forty-five when he fell in the fight. He was a Shawnoese savage of heroic mould, as gracefully proportioned as a Greek statue, and his penetrating eyes illumined his sad, stern countenance. He was a born leader of the children of the wilderness over whom he was omnipotent; and was alike the light of the camp-fire and wisdom of the council. Insidious in preparing as undaunted in executing enterprises, in his desperate forays he wielded for their success the influence of an hundred warriors. Though a demon of mischief and rapacious of plunder, he was generous to foes and lavish of his gains. In the control of his people he was cunning and plausible, and fired their passions by his nervous, glowing and impressive eloquence; in military genius and manhood he eclipsed his British chief, who to him owed nearly all he had won, except his heritage of infamy; and in fine, Tecumseh was a potentate uniting the prowess of Achilles and the authority of Agamemnon.

In Harrison's official despatch of the battle of the Thames, after complimenting those of higher rank, he says: "Major Wood of the Engineers, already distinguished by his conduct at Fort Meigs, attended the army with two six-pounders. Having no use for them in the action, he joined the pursuit of the enemy, and with Major Payne of the mounted regiment, two of my aids-de-camp—Todd and Chambers—and three privates, continued it for several miles after the rest of the troops had halted." The

pursuing force secured about fifty prisoners, and, though unable to overtake Proctor, Wood succeeded in capturing his sword, hat, papers, trunk and carriage. Wood and Todd being far in advance of the others, a mounted British officer, who was among the captured, endeavoured treacherously to shoot Todd. This attempt was instantly discovered by Major Wood who struck the assassin down with his sword, and thus saved the life of his companion-in-arms, who, subsequently, after filling many important civil offices in Kentucky, became in 1841–45 United States Minister to Russia.

This battle, the last which Harrison ever fought, gave him extraordinary reputation, and his laurels, there won, probably promoted him in 1841 to the Presidency of the United States. Doubtless this last was the best of his three campaigns, for the conduct of which he had more experience, a better knowledge of the enemy, a preponderance of regular troops, his staff composed of skilled officers, and an unmolested control of water transportation for his brave troops and his ample supplies. But much of his good fortune was due to the pusillanimity, inefficiency and blunders of Proctor; and, as Chatham said, "the degrading of an army of soldiers into a band of marauders and assassins." The chief omissions of Proctor were:

First: After the ice had disappeared from the Lakes in 1813, had the British general, instead of wasting his strength against the fortified positions at the Maumee Rapids and Lower Sandusky, sent a strong force with Barclay's fleet against Cleveland

and Erie, he could have captured all our boats at the former place and burned Perry's fleet in the bay of Presque Isle.

Second: By ignominiously running away and destroying his defenses, Harrison's landing in Canada was unopposed, and the smoking ruins of Malden checked him not a moment. The British retreat from Sandwich began September 28th, and the American pursuit not till October 2d, consequently we reached the Thames in less than half the time the enemy consumed to make this march to that battle-field. Our path through the forest was unobstructed by the felling of a tree, scarce a boat was destroyed, and the bridges were left nearly intact upon our approach. What a contrast to the impediments interposed by Schuyler to Burgoyne's advance on Saratoga in 1777! Here Harrison marched in a country, covered with forests and intersected with marshes and streams, *in three and a half days*, double the distance that Burgoyne, with his utmost efforts, moved over in the Hudson valley, from Scanesborough (Whitehall) to Bemus Heights in *eight weeks.*

Third: Though choosing a very advantageous battle-field on the Thames, Proctor neglected to cover the front of his demoralized army with the simplest intrenchment or even a strong abatis; and then formed his forces in open order of battle, through the files of which our mounted riflemen passed without difficulty, winning their victory in ten minutes, and capturing almost everything except the cowardly commander of the British and allied troops.

The American army had now made four campaigns in the Northwest against the treacherous elements and the more treacherous foe; yet, with all our sacrifices, we were, territorially, after sixteen months of sore trial, just where we began in this ill-directed war.

After the Thames campaign, Major Wood accompanied Harrison to the Niagara frontier; but the General, in November, having gone on leave of absence to see his family, and the season for active operations being over, Wood returned to the headquarters of the Corps of Engineers at West Point, where, during the winter, he was deeply absorbed in study and preparation for coming events.

Major-General Jacob Brown, who had so bravely defended Sackett's Harbor, May 29, 1813, and had commanded the élite of the army in Wilkinson's descent of the St. Lawrence in 1813, had, as early as February 1814, been designated by the Secretary of War as the General-in-Chief of the force which subsequently became the Army of the Niagara, of which Major McRee was to be the Chief Engineer, assisted by Brevet Major Wood with laurels freshly won in the Northwest. On the 13th of February, the latter, under orders received the 10th, left West Point, and repaired, first to Albany and then to Canandaigua, N. Y., to take part in the preparatory arrangements for the coming campaign. In a letter to a brother engineer, dated Feb. 21, 1814, after detailing some of these preparations, Wood says: "I hope we shall be able to do something for the honor of the service in the spring." Soon after he

was temporarily engaged, from April 25, to May 26, 1814, in strengthening the defenses of Sackett's Harbor.

Early in June the opening of the campaign was expected; but the first step did not take place till July 3d, when the Niagara was crossed by Brown and Fort Erie captured. Under McRee, the Chief Engineer, Wood was actively employed in crossing the ordnance over the river, reconnoitring the fort, and selecting sites, on the left bank, for batteries, only one of which, for 18 pounders, was established before the work surrendered. The subsequent events which transpired in this campaign will be detailed in this chapter, only so far as Major Wood was directly connected with them.

Wood, on the 5th, accompanied General Porter's small force of Pennsylvania Volunteers and Indians which endeavored to interpose between a British skirmishing party and their main body at Chippewa. Porter was successful in putting an outpost of the enemy's light troops to flight; but soon after, encountering the whole British force advancing in battle order, he was compelled to retreat to the protection of the left of General Scott's Brigade, which was advancing to the attack and defeat of the enemy. Towson's Battery, one of the guns of which Wood volunteered to serve, did admirable execution on Scott's right. At the close of this gallant fight, when Scott drove Riall to the protection of his intrenchments beyond Chippewa Creek, Wood made a most daring reconnoissance nearly up to its right bank, finding the bridge across it covered by a *tête-de-pont*

battery, and its planking torn up, which prevented the further pursuit of the enemy. "Wood's report of this reconnoissance, and the lateness of the hour," says Gen. Brown, induced him "to order the forces to retire to camp."

After the burial of the dead, and removal of the wounded, the engineers were energetically occupied in reconnoitering the adjacent country to ascertain the practicability of attacking the front or turning the right flank of Riall's strong position covered in front by Chippewa Creek and on the left by the Niagara River. The result of this reconnoissance was the discovery of an old disused road leading to the junction of Lyon's Creek with the Chippewa, which, in the opinion of both McRee and Wood, could be and was made practicable during the day for wagons and artillery. Early on the 8th, the British General, alarmed at the rapid progress of our flanking operations and the menacing attitude of Scott in his front, which threatened his capture or destruction, wisely decided to abandon his camp, disable his artillery, and retreat rapidly. Throwing part of his force into Forts George and Mississauga, Riall fell back twelve miles further up the Lake to Twenty-Mile Creek, designing to proceed to Burlington Heights, and there await re-enforcements.

Brown, on the 9th, followed the enemy and on the next day established his camp on the plains of Queenstown. At a council of war, held on the 14th, McRee, Wood, and a majority of the officers, urged an immediate attack on Riall before he could be re-enforced; but Brown and the minority advised

an investment of Fort George, though the army had no siege artillery.

Major Wood, on the 15th, accompanied General Porter's Brigade of Volunteers, with two pieces of artillery to within a mile, in full view of Fort George, and then with a strong escort advanced close enough to make a perfect reconnoissance of the work.

Brown was prepared to invest Fort George. On the 20th, the advance took place to within a mile of the work, and on the next day Wood and Douglass of the engineers, made a dashing reconnoissance under an incessant fire of the enemy, to within 700 yards of the fort, enabling them to ascertain the number, location and character of all the defenses, new and old.

The American Commander, on the 22d, being apprised that Riall had been re-enforced, withdrew to Queenstown Heights, and the day after, learning there was no hope of Commodore Chauncey's co-operation, or of any re-enforcements reaching his own army, he continued his retreat to the strong position of Chippewa, there to be governed by circumstances. The British followed, their advance, after a forced march, encamping on the 25th on a small eminence at Lundy's Lane.

On the afternoon of the 25th, Major Wood, with a countenance of unusual animation, riding up to Lieutenant Douglass, of the Engineers, said: "The British are understood to be crossing the Niagara at Queenstown, and threatening a dash up the river on that side. They are also in movement on this side. We wish to find out what their dispositions

are; and the detachment before us, under the command of General Scott, is ordered to make a reconnoissance and create a diversion, should circumstances require; and, if we meet the enemy, we shall probably feel his pulse." Both officers immediately rode forward to the front of the vanguard, and after proceeding three-fourths of a mile, reached the residence of Mrs. Wilson near the Table-rock, at Niagara Falls. Had they arrived ten minutes earlier, they would have captured General Riall, with his whole staff, who had just left the house to join his command, which was immediately after engaged with Scott's Brigade. Thus began the brilliant Battle of Niagara, where the American Army won unfading laurels in its terrible conflict with the greatly superior British force, largely composed of veterans fresh from victories over the great Marshals of the Conqueror of Europe. In his official account of this battle, General Brown says: "The engineers, Majors McRee and Wood, were greatly distinguished on this day, and their high military talents exerted with great effect; they were much under my eye, and near my person, and to their assistance a great deal is to be fairly ascribed. I most earnestly recommend them as worthy of the highest trust and confidence." Accordingly, both were brevetted Lieutenant-Colonels "for gallant conduct in the Battle of Niagara." These two Engineers and Brigadier-General Scott were the only officers who, for their meritorious services in that fierce contest were, at that time, singled out for honorable distinction by brevets to a higher grade.

From this point it was the intention of General Ripley, who succeeded to the command of the army on Brown's and Scott's disability from wounds, to retreat across the Niagara into our own territory; a disaster which was only prevented by the advice of McRee and Wood. When the proposition was again submitted, these able engineers were consulted by General Brown, who administered a severe rebuke to his subordinate, Ripley, and soon after superseded him by the appointment of General E. P. Gaines to the command.

Brown, on the 27th, ordered Ripley to take up a good position just above Fort Erie, and personally directed the engineers to strengthen and extend the works to sustain a siege. Day and night they labored at their heavy task to transform a feeble fort into a strong fortification. Lieutenant-General Drummond, the British commander, invested the American intrenchments August 3d, and continued the siege of the camp till September 17th, when Brown's successful sortie destroyed the enemy's labors of forty-five days, compelled his retreat, and virtually terminated the Niagara Campaign.

In the defense of our intrenchments, Wood not only performed his duty as an engineer, but took command, for the protection of the exposed left of our line, of the gallant Twenty-first Infantry, with which the brave Miller had carried the British battery on the hill at Lundy's Lane. He and McRee, constantly on the alert, on the evening of the 14th of August made careful inspection of the works and prepared everything to meet an anticipated

attack before dawn of the next morning. They were not mistaken in their predictions, which were realized before daylight of the 15th, by simultaneous assaults of British columns on our right, centre and left. The latter, 1,400 strong, under Lieut.-Colonel Fisher, was to escalade Towson's battery, and storm Wood's defenses between it and the lake. What was his astonishment when, instead of finding the garrison asleep, his advancing ranks were lit up by a volley of flame from Wood's infantry, while the battery, twenty feet higher, poured forth a continuous blaze of artillery fire, giving it from that night the appellation of "Towson's Lighthouse!" Failing to carry the battery or penetrate the abatis, the British, wading in the lake, attempted to turn our left, but after a desperate struggle were repulsed. Five times with fixed bayonets they moved to the assault of Wood's defenses and as often were foiled, till, finding their closed ranks mowed down with musketry, grape and canister, the beaten British abandoned the fruitless contest. In this defense, says General Ripley in his official report: "Wood has the merit, with the Spartan band, in connection with Captain Towson's artillery, of defeating a vaunted foe of six times his force." The attacks of the other column were equally unsuccessful.

Colonel Wood's official dispatch, dated Aug. 16, 1814, of the operations of his command in the Assault of Fort Erie on the night of the 14th, we give entire, never having seen it in print. He says: "In obedience to your instructions, I have

the honor to report the gallant conduct of my command during the attack which took place on the night of the fourteenth instant:

"I cannot do greater justice to the troops, which I had the honor to command on that occasion, than to state that the Twenty-first infantry, together with a small detachment of the Seventeenth under Captain Chunn, in all about three hundred men, aided by the skill and activity of that distinguished officer, Captain Towson of the Artillery, who commanded the battery on Snake Hill, met and repulsed five impetuous charges given by Colonel Fisher at the head of fourteen hundred British regulars. These troops were formed in columns of attack and stormed without flints in their muskets. Our lines were completely manned and every thing ready to receive the enemy when he approached. And, perhaps, a more signal example of firmness and steady valour was seldom, if ever, given by the veterans of Europe. Finding himself repulsed at all points with great slaughter, Colonel Fisher saw fit to retire with his shattered columns at dawn of day.

"For the happy result, which crowned our arms at this particular point, I am under great obligations to Captains Marston and Ropes, the former of whom commanded on the left and the latter commanded the Corps of Reserves which repulsed the enemy at the edge of the water after he had turned the left of the abatis and completely gained my rear. Capt. Chunn, who commanded on my right, had not the good fortune to come in contact with the enemy until he was sent to re-enforce the gar-

rison at Fort Erie where he had a fair opportunity and behaved with great skill and bravery in expelling the enemy from that place. The small re-enforcements of riflemen, which arrived before the enemy made his last charge, under that brave officer Capt. Birdsall, rendered me considerable service.

"Lieutenants Bowman, Riddle, Hall, Larned and Ensigns Bean, Neely, Green, Jones, Cummings and Thomas were all extremely active and performed their duty with alacrity. I have to regret that the army is deprived of the services of Lieutenant Bushnell and Ensign Cissney, both of whom are severely if not mortally wounded. Our trophies in the morning were about one hundred and twenty prisoners and a considerable number of scaling ladders, picks, axes, etc."

Both belligerents now prepared for another struggle. Brown, seeing his impending danger from the greatly superior numbers of his antagonist, determined to attempt the bold design of destroying the enemy's siege-works by a sortie from our intrenchments, to which the engineers gave a hearty concurrence. Towards noon of September 17th, General Porter on the left, and General Miller in the centre sallied forth with their respective divisions. Wood, leading the former as engineer, and, at the same time commanding a column composed of 400 regulars from the 21st and 25th infantry, followed by 500 volunteers and militia. The enemy was surprised, his batteries captured, cannon and carriages destroyed, magazines blown up, numerous prisoners taken, and the objects of the sortie fully accomplished. Porter's

victory was complete; but it was won at a fearful cost, his three principal leaders being mortally wounded. "Among our losses," says Lieut. Douglass of the engineers, "I have the sorrow to name our ever to be lamented and gallant friend, Colonel Wood. He went out with the volunteer division, and, amidst the confusion which necessarily attends a fight in the woods, was, somehow, separated from them. When they returned after the battle, he was missing. Enquiry was made, next day, by a flag; and we received the unwelcome intelligence that he was mortally wounded in the action, and died in the British camp, the night after, professing, it is said, the most ardent attachment to his country, and a jealous solicitude for the honor of her arms, commending her, with his last breath, to the favor and protection of the Almighty."

"Oh death resistless! how thy sovereign sway,
Sweeps from our earth its fairest sons away.
Columbia mourns; thy favorite Wood's no more,
He bravely fell on Erie's hostile shore;
Could angels weep to view a mortal's doom,
Celestial pity would bedew his tomb.
* * * * * He was by all admired,
By age respected and by youth revered,
His friends with pleasure viewed his rising fame,
And dwelt with transport on his honored name;
When lo! a cloud ascending from the North,
Blackening still deeper as it rolled forth;
Death rode upon the whirlwind as it came,
Mid blood and slaughter and devouring flame;
Arm'd with his dart—commissioned from on high,
Wood felt the wound; and knew that he must die.
On no soft down his bleeding form was laid,
No mother dear sustained his sinking head;
No sister kind whom soft affections move,
Stood round his couch to pour the balm of love,

> But God was there—his spirit mov'd around
> In solemn silence ; while a heav'nly sound,
> In blissful accents, such as angels breathe,
> When sent immortal blessings to bequeathe,
> Rose in his ear ; and in that awful pause,
> Wood died, a martyr in a glorious cause."

Thus ended the brief and brilliant career of this noble soldier, who had few equals and was surpassed by none of his profession and peers. Young in age, he was a veteran in the art of war. His eight years of army life "had uniformly been an exhibition of military skill, acute judgment and heroic valor;" and, in the language of his commanding general, "no officer of his grade could have contributed more to the safety and honor of the army." He was truly the soul and genius of every enterprise in which he was engaged; one of "the immortal names that were not born to die." His daily companions loved him, for he was social and genial, the most honorable and generous of men, and as affectionate and gentle as a maiden. His official superiors vied in their tributes to his worth, for he was the intellectual light of the council and the lion of the battle-field. Though extremely retiring and modest in manner, his form, features, military air and bearing disclosed the beau-ideal soldier, the real *preux chevalier*, who, wherever danger appeared, was there as calm, fearless and self-possessed as upon a quiet parade. On the field of Niagara, meeting Brown almost fainting from his wound, Wood exclaimed, with great emotion: "Never mind, my dear General, you are gaining the greatest victory which has ever been won for your country." He thought not of physical pain, but, amid the carnage

of battle, his heroic soul glowed with lofty enthusiasm for his country's glory. His nobility of nature impressed every one. Says the Rev. Dr. Douglass, speaking of his father's lectures on the Campaign of 1814: "His mention of Colonel Wood was marked with undisguised warmth and affectionate feeling. It seemed impossible for him to look back to the young days of an ardent and generous ambition, without a pang of sorrow, at the recollection of the high-minded and chivalrous man, who was his friend and brother-in-arms; his companion, amidst scenes of the most soul-stirring interest; his tutor in military science; his Mentor in the perplexities of an early and important responsibility; his guide and example, in all that was high, noble and disinterested, in the walk and profession of a soldier."

It was Wood's peculiar good fortune to be prominent in every branch of his profession; whether as an engineer, making the daring reconnoissance, or directing defenses; as an artillerist, pursuing the flying foe to the Thames, or serving in the battery at Chippewa; as a Paladin cavalier, in the final rout of Proctor's last fugitives; or the accomplished infantry commander leading the column and charging the besiegers at Fort Erie. While first in battle, he was also first in the estimation of those he so faithfully served. Harrison assigns to him "the first palm of merit" at Fort Meigs, and highly praises his efficiency in the invasion of Canada; Brown reports his marked distinction at Niagara, where his "high military talents were exerted with great effect," and to whose "assistance a great deal

is fairly to be ascribed"; Gaines says, "in the command of a regiment of infantry he has often proved himself well qualified, but never so conspicuously as in the repulse of the British assault on Fort Erie"; Ripley, on the same occasion, acknowledges his indebtedness to "this officer's merits, so well known that approbation can scarcely add to his reputation"; Porter, under whom he led a column in the sortie from Fort Erie, reports to Brown, "you know how exalted an opinion I have always entertained of him"; and his Commanding General, when this pillar of his power lay prostrate in death, pronounced this truthful eulogy to his worth: "Wood, brave, generous and enterprising, died as he had lived, without a feeling but for the honor of his country and the glory of her arms. His name and example will live to guide the soldier in the path of duty so long as true heroism is held in estimation."

All authority warrants us in saying that, during the whole operations on the Niagara, no terms of praise could do justice to Wood's gallantry, zeal, skill and perseverance, whether in reconnoitring the enemy, ascertaining and reporting his position, encouraging the troops, conducting columns to their destination, planning judicious movements, providing against emergencies, devising defenses, seeing the key-point of the battle-field, or grasping the whole problem of the campaign.

After the termination of the war, Sept. 12, 1816, Major-General Jacob Brown, then General-in-Chief, addressed the following letter to Brigadier-General Joseph G. Swift, Chief Engineer of the Army.

"I think it proper to express to you, as Chief of the Corps of Engineers, the high sense I entertain of the services of Colonel McRee, Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, Captain Douglass and Lieutenant Story, who served with my division upon the Niagara in 1814. They were all greatly distinguished, but Colonel McRee and Lieutenant-Colonel Wood have particular claims upon me for the cheerfulness and ardor with which they entered upon the execution of every enterprise, having in view the honor of my command, and for the zeal and talent they uniformly displayed.

"Lieutenant-Colonel Wood fell! The occasion and the manner of his death secure to him the patriot soldier's best reward—pure and imperishable fame. To this I can add nothing; but, as a tribute of my respect for the hero and the man, I request you to cause a monument to be erected, at my expense, to his memory. Let it stand near the Military Academy, at West Point, and, though it cannot elevate his name, it may stimulate the soldiers of his school to die, like him, without a feeling but for the honor of their country and the glory of her arms."

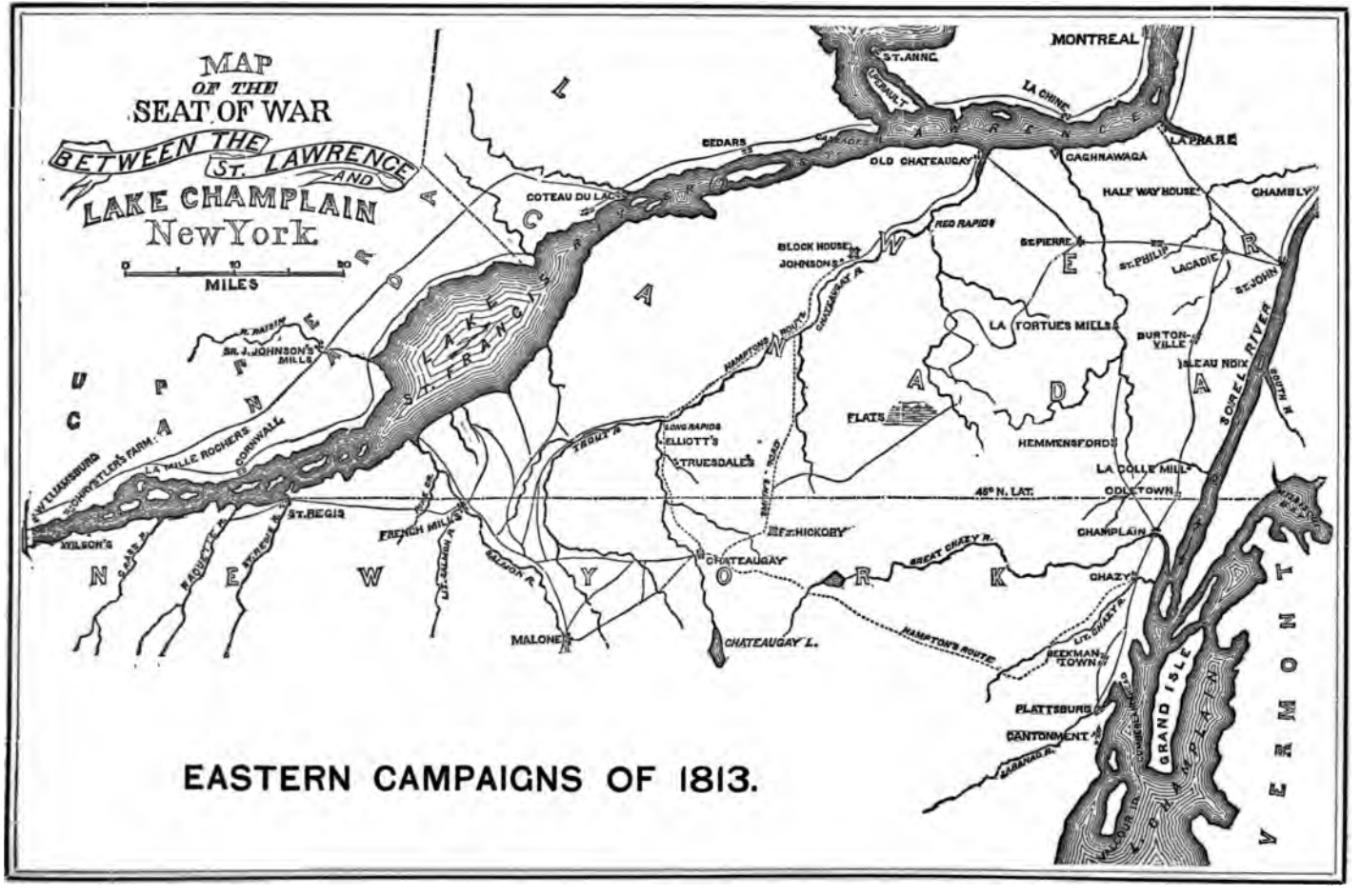
In compliance with this request, so honorable to General Brown, the Chief Engineer had executed the white marble obelisk now gracing the little knoll, north of the West Point Plain, looking up the Hudson upon the most beautiful river view in the world. Upon the occasion of the erection of this monument, General Swift, August 17, 1818, directs Major Thayer, Superintendent of the Military Academy, to conduct the ceremony with all

due military honors, and to issue an appropriate order to his command, "to portray the character of our deceased brother officer."

This simple monument bears the following inscriptions: *North Side*—"To the Memory of Lieutenant-Colonel E. D. Wood, of the Corps of Engineers, who fell while leading a charge at the Sortie of Fort Erie, Upper Canada, 17th September, 1814, in the 31st year of his age." *West Side:* "He was exemplary as a Christian, and distinguished as a Soldier." *South Side:* "A Pupil of this Institution, he died an honour to his country." *East Side:* "This Memorial was erected by his friend and commander—Major-General Jacob Brown."

After this monument to Colonel Wood was erected, the following lines were composed by the late General I. Morton:

"What though on foeman's land he fell,
No stone the sacred spot to tell,
Yet where the noble Hudson's waves,
Its shores of lofty granite laves,
The loved associates of his youth,
Who knew his worth—his spotless truth,
Have bade the marble column rise,
To bid the world that youth to prize;
To teach the youth like him t' aspire,
And never-fading fame acquire;
Like him on Glory's wings to rise,
To reach, to pierce the azure skies,
And oft the Patriot then shall sigh,
And sorrow oft cloud Beauty's eye,
When'er fond memory brings again
The YOUTH who sleeps on ERIE'S plain."



EASTERN CAMPAIGNS OF 1813.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

EASTERN CAMPAIGNS OF 1813;

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF

BRIG.-GENERAL JOSEPH G. SWIFT.

In the Second projected Invasion of Canada, Quebec was deemed too strong to be assailed with success; and Montreal, whose loss would involve that of Upper Canada, promised an easier conquest. For this ultimate purpose as stated in the previous chapter, three columns were put in motion in 1813; one designed to penetrate the enemy's territory by the Detroit Straits; another somewhere on the Ontario border; and the third by the outlet of Lake Champlain. This was repeating, essentially, the plan which had resulted in the miserable failure of 1812. We have already given the operations of the Northwestern Army, or Left Column, terminating in Harrison's victory of the Thames. In this chapter we will sketch the chief movements of the Armies of the Centre and Right, the former operating on the Ontario frontier, and the later moving from Lake Champlain.

General Dearborn, in command of all the forces destined to take part in the Eastern Campaign of 1813, was directed by the War Department to reduce Kingston and York (now Toronto) on Lake Ontario and Forts George and Erie on the Niagara. The Commanding General, however, for reasons totally

insufficient, decided to reserve the attack of Kingston for the *last*, though it was the *first* in importance, being the naval rendezvous of the British Ontario fleet, and the head-quarters of the English land forces.

In prosecution of this inverted plan of campaign, Dearborn, with 1,700 men crowded on Chauncey's fleet, sailed from Sackett's Harbor, April 25, 1813, and, after a boisterous passage of two days, arrived off York, which was feebly protected by a few block-houses and earthen batteries garrisoned with about 800 regulars, militia and Indians. General Dearborn, being in ill-health, remained on shipboard, while our troops, led by General Pike, landed under a brisk fire, fought their way through the thick woods, carried the first battery, took possession of the "Half-moon," and were preparing to assault the main intrenchments when the great magazine blew up with a tremendous explosion, scattering ruin on every side, killing and maiming over two hundred of our men and many of their own, and mortally wounding the intrepid Pike who died soon after like a true hero. Though we had captured the place and a large amount of stores, General Sheaffe, the British commander, with his regulars was allowed to escape, and a vessel on the stocks to be destroyed.

The first object of the expedition being accomplished, the troops were immediately re-embarked, but, on account of adverse winds, did not leave York harbor till May 8th, and not until the 27th was the attack upon Fort George essayed. An entire month of the

best campaigning season was lost in bringing re-enforcements from Sackett's Harbor, and in other dilatory proceedings. Dearborn's army, numbering nearly 6,000, was ready for the fray on the morning of the 27th, but the Commanding General remained on shipboard as at York. Under cover of the guns of Chauncey's fleet, our gallant soldiers reached the shore, with intrepidity clambered up the steep bank exposed to the enemy's fire, and in twenty minutes of severe fighting put the foe to flight. General Vincent, the British commander, satisfied that after our success he could no longer hold Fort George, ordered its guns to be spiked, the work to be abandoned, and the garrison to flee to Beaver Dams, a strong position among the hills. Colonel Winfield Scott, in rapid pursuit of the enemy, learning his designs, detached two companies who saved the fort after one of its three magazines had been blown up. Scott vigorously pursued, and could easily have captured Vincent, but was reluctantly compelled by repeated orders to give up the chase, return to Fort George, and abandon the almost attained conquest of the Niagara Peninsula.

Two days after these events, while most of our forces were afar off at the head of Lake Ontario, and Sackett's Harbor at its foot was nearly stripped of its garrison, Governor-General Provost, with a thousand men from Kingston assisted by the British squadron, decided to retaliate for our attacks on York and Fort George by capturing our naval and military stores at Sackett's Harbor, and by destroying a fine ship (the General Pike) there on the stocks.

Fortunately, a few regulars, under the bold Colonel Backus, had been left to guard this property, and the gallant General Jacob Brown was at hand to assume command. Though the militia fled upon the enemy's approach, Brown thwarted his design, compelled his precipitate retreat, and gained a complete victory—the last success of our inglorious campaign of 1813. Unfortunately in the confusion of the attack, through some misunderstanding of affairs, the naval officer, in charge of the stores and ship on the stocks, set them on fire.

After the capture of Fort George, General Dearborn, when too late, ordered the pursuit of Vincent, who, in the meantime, having drawn in all his scattered forces, posted himself, on the 29th of May, at Burlington Heights, a position vital to the safety of the British, without which they could neither retain the Peninsula, nor make a safe exit from it. On the 1st of June, General Winder was sent to dislodge the enemy with a small brigade, which was inadequate to the task. Upon asking for re-enforcements, General Chandler, on the 5th, brought up another brigade, giving a total force of 1,300. Instead of promptly marching to attack Vincent, only a few miles off, Chandler, the senior general, halted at Stony Creek and carelessly encamped for the night, which Vincent discovered by a bold reconnoissance in the evening. Knowing that not a moment was to be lost, if with his inferior forces he was to maintain his position, he wisely decided to attack at once rather than be attacked the next day with every chance of discomfiture. Having decided to surprise

Chandler, the British column of 700, silently moving at midnight, seized every man of the American picket, and made two false attacks, while the real one on our centre was eminently successful in capturing some artillery and a hundred prisoners, including both of the American generals. Vincent, the British commander, in the confusion of the night-attack, lost his way; but fortunately for the enemy, he was succeeded by the able Lieut.-Colonel Harvey (subsequently Governor of New Brunswick), while our forces fell under the command of Colonel Burns, a brave but inexperienced officer, who at once called a council of war, which of course did not advise fighting, preferring to fall back before half their numbers and await further orders. Had a resolute and energetic officer then have directed our forces, Vincent would have been put to flight or captured, the Peninsula been ours, our march on Kingston been unimpeded, and the after disasters on the St. Lawrence been avoided.

Another fortnight of inaction followed, during which General Vincent and Colonel Bishopp were indefatigable in strongly occupying the mountain passes from Queenstown to York. At last, the final mishap of our campaign that summer on the Peninsula occurred. Colonel Boestler, with 600 men, was sent to Beaver Dams to attack a fortified storehouse where considerable supplies were stored. The detachment, June 24th, fell into an Indian ambuscade, and, after a three hours' contest, when about to retire, were deluded by a small British force of regulars, by threats of savage slaughter, into a capit-

ulation. Except some raids along the Niagara, destroying much property, nothing more was done in this quarter during this campaign. The British now boldly advanced upon Queenstown, held Burlington Heights, and invested Fort George with formidable forces.

Dearborn, disqualified by age and ill-health for active command, was superseded on the 6th of June, and took leave of the army July 15th, General Boyd temporarily succeeding to the command till the arrival of General Wilkinson. The latter, with the bulk of our forces did not leave Fort George, till October 2d, until which time our army was cooped up in that work under orders of the Secretary of War to hold the enemy at bay. Thus, from May to October, while the enemy was most active, we, during these four most favorable months for campaigning, did nothing.

General James Wilkinson, who succeeded Dearborn in the command of the Northern Army, had been an active officer of the Revolution, particularly on the staff of Gates when Burgoyne surrendered at Saratoga. Now, too old for his position, he soon fell ill with a fever, dreaded responsibility, and was weighed down with morbid anxiety. While on his way to Sackett's Harbor, to assume his new duties, he had issued, August 16, his first order to General Wade Hampton, who had been assigned to the command of the forces on Lake Champlain. Hampton had also been an officer of the Revolution, as a partisan ranger in South Carolina, in connection with Marion. This order of Wilkinson's aroused the ire

of the old slave-holding aristocrat, and intensified his former hatred of the new General-in-Chief. He immediately wrote to the Secretary of War that his was a separate command. Armstrong tried to reconcile him to a distinction between separate and independent command; but the implacable enmity which had been engendered continued to rankle, and, as the sequel will show, defeated the success of the campaign.

After nearly half a year's fruitless effort to make a permanent lodgment on the Ontario shore, the Secretary of War's original project of campaign was again revived. To this Wilkinson objected, while Armstrong insisted; the former in the mean time, without any definite plan of operations to be pursued, having departed for Sackett's Harbor. He had a nominal army of about 12,000 men, one third at Burlington, Vt., under Hampton; another third at Sackett's Harbor, and the remaining third at Fort George. At a council of officers it was resolved to abandon and destroy Fort George, and transfer the troops to Sackett's Harbor; but the War Department ordered 600 regulars to continue to garrison that work, the remainder of the troops there, as we have before stated, having embarked on the fleet. Most of the regulars, left in garrison under Colonel Scott, soon after joined Wilkinson's St. Lawrence Expedition, their places being supplied by militia, under General McClure, who subsequently abandoned the work, and burned Newark, which outrage was summarily avenged by the destruction of six villages, many isolated country houses, and five vessels, and the

butchering of innocent persons at Fort Niagara, Lewiston, Schlosser, Tuscarora Village, Black Rock and Buffalo.

General Wilkinson assumed command, at Sackett's Harbor, August 29, 1813, having for his Chief Engineer Colonel Joseph G. Swift, the Chief Engineer of the United States Army. Soon after, the Secretary of War arrived at that post, ostensibly to promote harmony between Wilkinson and Hampton, but more probably to assume the functions of General-in-Chief. He was a headstrong, ambitious man of Irish descent, his father having emigrated to Pennsylvania about 1746, where he became a Lieutenant-Colonel in the old French war, a Brigadier-General in the Continental Army, and a Major-General, commanding the Pennsylvania State troops in the defense of Philadelphia, and the Battles of Brandywine and Germantown. It is said that the son, then Secretary of War, wanted to play a more distinguished role than the father, and aspired to be a Lieutenant-General to command all the Armies of the United States, but that he was not a favorite with President Madison; consequently, had that office been created by Congress, Colonel James Monroe, then Secretary of State, would have been appointed.

While Wilkinson and Armstrong at Sackett's Harbor were confronting the enemy at Kingston and discussing plans for its attack, Hampton, with 4,000 infantry, a squadron of horse, and a well-appointed train of artillery under Major McRee, of the Engineers, set out towards Montreal for the purpose of

demonstration or attack, as circumstances might render most expedient.

Leaving Clarke's brigade of Vermont militia to draw Provost's attention to an attack by the Sorel, Hampton, on the 19th of September, began his march from Cumberland Head, opposite Plattsburg, direct on Odell-Town (just within the Canadian border), which he reached on the 21st; but a prevailing drought caused his retrograde movement to Chazy, and the adoption of the Chateaugay route to the St. Lawrence. At the "Four-Corners," now the village of Chateaugay, he encamped for twenty-six days awaiting orders.

During this month of delay, Hampton, having satisfied himself that Provost's scattered forces were less than half his own in numbers, determined to press forward, crush all opposing troops, make himself master of Montreal, and without Wilkinson's assistance, become the laureled hero of the campaign. Resuming, therefore, his march on the 21st of October, on the evening of the next day he had overcome twenty-four of the forty miles which had separated him from his goal. Here, near the confluence of Outard Creek and Chateaugay River, he remained till the stores and artillery came up on the 24th.

Immediately in front of Hampton were seven miles of open country along the river to Johnson's, where an extensive and dense forest lay in the way. In this Colonel De Salaberry, with a thousand men, had intrenched himself behind a log breast-work and block-house, protected by a strong abatis and covered with a picket line of Indians and a light corps of

Canada militia. On the 25th Hampton thought to grasp his coveted laurels; but

> "The best laid schemes o' mice and men
> Gang aft a-gley;
> And leave us naught but grief and pain
> For promised joy."

Hampton dispatched Colonel Purdy and the light troops of Boyd's brigade to force the ford eight miles below, turn the enemy's left, and gain the British rear by dawn of the 26th, while General Izard with the main body was to assail the front as soon as Purdy's fire should open. But the ignorant guides lost their way in the thick hemlock swamp during the darkness, so that it was not till two in the afternoon that the crack of Purdy's rifles was heard and then in a wrong direction, he having fallen into an ambuscade, whereupon his disconcerted detachment fled on the first fire; the enemy, equally discreet and courageous, doing the same. In the meantime, Izard's column drove in two pickets and was soon engaged with De Salaberry, the British commander, who perceiving that he was greatly outnumbered, resorted to a ruse worthy of the days of Jericho. Posting buglers along his thin but covered line, these windy warriors, when some concealed militia opened fire upon Hampton's flank, blew loud and repeated signals for the charge, which so alarmed the General and so thoroughly convinced him of the thousands of rogues in buckram before him, that, after a long hour's fight by Shrewsbury clock, an immediate retreat was ordered and promptly obeyed. Thus ended the valiant advance of this conquering army, to pre-

serve which a solemn council of war deemed it proper to seek a place of safety, and soon after go into winter quarters.

Before giving the movements of Wilkinson's army from Sackett's Harbor, we must introduce his Chief Engineer in this campaign.

JOSEPH GARDNER SWIFT was the First Graduate of the Military Academy, at West Point, N. Y., and succeeded Colonel Jonathan Williams, July 31, 1812, as Chief Engineer of the U. S. Army.

His ancestors on his father's side were English husbandmen, who migrated to Squantum, in Massachusetts Bay, soon after the first Colony landed at Plymouth; and on his mother's side were Huguenots from Leyden, in Holland, who also landed in Boston Bay. Among their descendants were a Chief Justice of Connecticut, a Senator from Vermont, a Governor of New York, and several Revolutionary officers of note.

He was directly descended from Thomas Swift and Hopestill Foster, who were the first settlers, in 1630, of Dorchester, Mass. His grandfather, Samuel Swift, a graduate of Cambridge, in 1735, was a lawyer of Boston (mentioned in the elder Adams' memoirs), who fell in 1775, one of the first martyrs in our struggle for independence. His father, Dr. Foster Swift, in 1782, was a prisoner on board the frigate "Culloden," of Rodney's fleet, and died a Surgeon of the U. S. Army, August 18, 1835. His mother was Deborah Delano, of Nantucket, Mass., where her son was born on the last day of the year 1783, and was named after Dr. Joseph Gardner, of Boston, in compliment to his father's old school-teacher.

Young Swift grew up among the primitive people of his native isle, noted for their confiding intimacy, simple hospitality, and those domestic virtues which characterized his after life. At the age of six he saw the "Hero"—Washington—on Boston Common, which made an indelible impression upon the precocious boy, and, possibly, planted the germ from which grew the after soldier.

In 1792 his father removed to Taunton, Mass., which became the future home of the family. Here young Swift, under the tutelage of the Rev. Samuel Daggett, acquired an academical education fitting him to enter Harvard College.

From his father's diary he had read, and from an intimate friend of the family—General David Cobb, Aid-de-Camp to Washington—he had heard vivid descriptions of scenes of the War of Independence, and of Shay's Insurrection, which strongly excited him. These were intensified by the stirring events of the French Revolution then transpiring, and though a boy but ten years old, he, having a remarkable musical talent, used to sing translated French songs at the civic feasts, given in 1793, on Taunton Green, in honor of French liberty. His military enthusiam was rekindled in 1799, when the Fourteenth Regiment of United States Infantry encamped on the banks of the Taunton River.

By the advice and with the assistance of General Cobb, then a member of Congress, young Swift was appointed by President John Adams, May 12, 1800, a Cadet of Artillerists and Engineers. On the 12th of June following he reported for duty, in Newport

Harbor, R. I., to the veteran Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Tousard, who had been a Captain in the Continental Army, and in 1778 had lost an arm in the engagement of Quaker Hill. It was Tousard who built the "Dumplin Tower," on Connanicut Island, and shared in the construction of old Fort Adams at Brenton's Point. Cadet Swift was attached to Captain Stoddard's company, at Fort Walcott, on Goat Island, a work rebuilt in 1795 by Colonel Rochefontaine. Transferred from the quiet of Taunton to the charms of active life, he was engaged here until October 7, 1801, upon the various fortifications about Newport, and while at this, even then fashionable watering place, he formed the acquaintance of many distinguished men: the Gibbs, Champlins, Perrys, Auchmutys, Alstons, Hunters, Malbones, etc. Being an ardent Federalist, he, at this time, also took an active part in the discussions of the day, particularly the question of peace or war growing out of our foreign relations. Though war with Great Britain for a time had been averted by Jay's treaty of 1794, hostilities with France actually existed, Commodore Truxton having captured the frigate Insurgente, and crippled the Vengeance. The fierceness and acrimony of party, by the more intelligent class as well as the masses, since the days of the Whigs and Tories of the Revolution, had not been surpassed.

During the Summer of 1801, General Dearborn, then Secretary of War, had given notice to our little army that President Jefferson had ordered the establishment of a Military School at West

Point, for the education of cadets, under the law of 1794, and subsequent acts of Congress which authorized the appointment of professors of the arts and sciences, and the purchase of apparatus and instruments necessary for the instruction of the artillerists and engineers. To this school, Swift, as directed by the Secretary of War, repaired, and reported October 14, 1801, having visited, on his way, the battle-field of Long Island, and ascended the Hudson, whose banks had scarce ceased to echo the stirring events of our Revolutionary history. What a contrast to the varied scenes since enacted on the Plain of West Point was this stripling boy, standing alone, the solitary pioneer of thousands whose fame has filled the pages of their Country's history! The same gorgeous landscape then as now, was lit up by a calm October sunset, and the hills around were as eloquent with legend and story of the past; but how little could he foresee the future glories of the present renowned institution of which he was the first élève!

George Baron, who was in charge of this school, was a North of England man, who had been a fellow teacher with Charles Hutton in the British Military Academy, at Woolwich. He was rude in manner, but was an able instructor, and had been appointed June 6, 1801, under the law of 1798, to be Professor of Mathematics. By him Cadet Swift was instructed in the first problems of Hutton's Mathematics, explained at the blackboard, which appears to have been thus early in use at West Point. The study hours were from eight to twelve in the morning, the afternoon being "variously occupied in some

brief military exercises, but much more in field sports."

Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications, took command, December 15, 1801, of this first military school at West Point. Swift made good progress in his studies under the new superintendent, who was very kind to him, loaned him books, and received him often at his table, thereby establishing those cordial relations which formed "one of the brightest remembrances of his life."

In the new Military Academy, established by the law of March 16, 1802, Swift made excellent progress; was transferred July 28, 1802, to be a Cadet of Engineers; and was considered by Colonel Williams "the foremost Cadet on the score of genius and quickness of apprehension." After examination he became, October 12, 1802, the first graduate of the present celebrated Military Academy.

Till April 30, 1804, he continued at West Point, except while on leave of absence and attending Courts Martial, in those days of frequent occurrence and often for the trial of the most trivial offences—a Colonel refusing to cut off his cue and trim his whiskers to a prescribed line, a Major for selling milk to his command, and a Lieutenant for shooting his Captain's ducks. For the trial of such grave delinquencies, officers of high rank were often ordered from the remotest parts of the Union. To one of Swift's social nature it was delightful to exchange the dull routine of garrison life for the intercourse of gentlemen of position and culture whom he often met when attending these courts.

He especially enjoyed the society of public men, with whom he could discuss national affairs, he being an ardent Federalist of the Washington school. Dining one day with the President, Swift, then only just of age, did not hesitate freely to argue upon the policy of the country with Mr. Jefferson, who was remarkable for his urbanity to young men. Swift's diary is full of reminiscences of his intercourse with such men as Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr, General Dearborn, Luther Martin, General Eaton (hero of Derne), Viscount Bolingbroke, Clement Biddle (Q. M. General of Washington's Army), Mr. Madison, General St. Clair, Judge Marshall, Governor Smith, of North Carolina, and other shining lights of the day.

Swift, June 17, 1804, took charge, as Superintending Engineer, of the construction of the defenses of the mouth of the Cape Fear River in North Carolina; and in January 1805, by order of the General-in-Chief, relieved Lieutenant Furgus of the command of Fort Johnson, N. C. The right of engineer officers to command troops by this order was admitted, though, June 20, 1803, Colonel Williams had been driven out of service because the Secretary of War had denied to him the same claim. During this winter of 1805, he performed the double duties of Engineer and Post Commander; was June 11, 1805, promoted to a First Lieutenancy; and Oct. 30, 1806, became a Captain of Engineers.

Continuing on duty in North Carolina till March 20, 1807, he had formed the acquaintance of many intelligent southern gentlemen and studied

southern institutions, particularly slavery, upon which he held decidedly advanced opinions.

Swift, relieved from duty in North Carolina, arrived at West Point, April, 6, 1807, and on the 14th, when Major William Amherst Barron, the senior engineer officer present, was arrested, took command of the Military Academy in the absence of Colonel Williams, then on a tour of inspection. Here he remained till Nov. 23, 1807, when the Academy was closed for the winter vacation, and he was relieved from duty at West Point.

At this time the arrogant maritime pretensions of England over our neutral commerce, as set forth in her Orders in Council, and the no less insufferable mandates of Napoleon in his Berlin and Milan Decrees, roused the United States to a true sense of the nation's dignity. Though unprepared for war with either of these great powers, Congress resolved, in 1808, to place the country in an attitude of defense by increasing the Army and making large appropriations for fortifications and ordnance.

Swift, promoted to be a Major of Engineers, Feb. 23, 1808, was assigned, March 14th, to the charge of the defenses of the "Eastern Department," embracing the coasts of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine, having for his assistants Lieutenants Totten, Thayer and Willard of the Engineers. The existing works in this district, built by Rochefontaine, Rivardi and Tousard, French engineers who had been in our service, were small and totally inadequate for the defense of our harbors. But deficient as were these "narrow redoubts," the

War Department, not to be outdone in ignorance of the engineering art, undertook, at Washington, without surveys, to plan fortifications for all selected sites. Notwithstanding Swift's engineering ability was thus ignored by the War Department, he immediately commenced making examinations and surveys of the various harbors. He recommended the occupation by defensive works of George's Island and Long Island Head to command the main entrance into Boston Harbor, and selected Naugus Head at Salem, Black Point on the Merrimac, Kittery at Portsmouth, and Spring Point and House Island at Portland, as eligible sites for new works. The wisdom of these selections has since been amply confirmed by numerous Boards of Engineers, which have, from time to time, projected important forts and batteries for most of these localities. But the War Department assuming a monopoly of engineering skill, sent to Major Swift, May 10, 1808, a score of "plans of a species of Star Fort, too small for any flank defense and too complicate for a mere battery, and unsuited to the positions for which they had been devised." The only resort left Swift "was to turn these plans on their centres until they might suit the sites as best they might, in Boston, Portland and other harbors."

The "Washington Stars" were supposed to be emanations of the brain of Colonel Henry Burbeck, an honest old veteran and good artillery officer, but whose whole knowledge of engineering was probably derived from some treatise on fortification of the Middle Ages. Despite all remonstrance upon their

absurdity, they were ordered to be built. Some of them remain to this day as monuments of past ignorance and the folly of the old regime of the War Department, which distrusted the ability our of young officers of engineers educated at the Military Academy; and believed more in its own learning in the art of war, which must have come like Dogberry's knowledge of reading and writing.

Though the engineering duties imposed upon Swift, now but twenty-five years old, were onerous, he found time to prepare the projectiles, implements and gun carriages for the works under his charge.

At Boston, Swift became intimate with Doctor William Eustis who was appointed by President Madison to be Secretary of War, March 7, 1809. The unfledged Cabinet Minister invited the young Major of Engineers to accompany him to Washington and induct him into the mysteries of his new vocation. Together they set out, March 25th, and arrived at the Capital, April 7, 1809. In the course of this journey Swift met many distinguished men: General Cobb, formerly Aid-de-Camp to Washington, at Trenton; Colonel David Humphreys, ex-Minister to Spain, at New London; Hon. Pierrepont Edwards, at New Haven; Colonel Marinus Willet, of the Revolution, at New York; Colonel William Duane, at Philadelphia; General Samuel Smith and Mrs. Jerome Bonaparte, at Baltimore, and many others of less note at various points. With persons of this stamp he was upon a familiar footing, and by such intercourse became acquainted with the past deficiencies and future wants of the country. On the day

the Secretary took charge of the War Department, he, Swift, and many other personages dined with President Madison, whom he found "a very instructive person in conversation and fond of story-telling, particularly reminiscences of the progress of the Government after the peace of 1783, and especially of scenes in the Convention to form the Constitution of 1787." After Swift's return to the east, though much occupied with his duties, he found time to cultivate the acquaintance of prominent men, which had a large influence in giving him that breadth of thought and those liberal views which made him a leading man in after years.

Swift, during his residence in North Carolina in 1804–7, had so endeared himself to the Southern people, and commanded such an influence in the State, that he was again ordered to his old station at the mouth of the Cape Fear River, for which he embarked from Boston on the last of October, 1809.

The appropriations for fortifications in 1810 being small, Swift's operations were confined to repairs of defenses and building of barracks. Congress then, as now, thought more of making party capital than providing for the common defense of the nation, seriously threatened with war by both England and France.

On the 20th of July, 1811, Swift was detailed as a member of the Court Martial for the trial of General Wilkinson, General-in-Chief of the Army, which convened at Frederick, Md., Sept. 1, 1811. General Wilkinson, says Swift, "came into court with his counsel, Roger B. Taney (subsequently

Chief-Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court), and with eloquent address said to General Gansevoort—'Mr. President, this sword,' unclasping it from his side, 'has been the untarnished companion of my thigh for forty years, with a resolution never to surrender it dishonorably to an enemy. I am now by the order of the government of my country ordered to place it in your hands,' and stepping forward, handed the sword to General Gansevoort, who, with much simplicity and dignity, and uncommon brevity, replied: 'General, I receive your sword—these officers are assembled to try you, and will doubtless do you justice. Are you ready, General?' 'I am,' said Wilkinson. 'Mr. Advocate (General Walter Jones of Virginia), please to proceed with the trial.'"

The Court, after a session of four months, adjourned Dec. 24, 1811, having acquitted General Wilkinson of all the charges against him. On the 26th of Dec., says Swift, "I paid my respects to the Secretary of War at Washington, and found myself not as graciously received as was the wont of that gentleman who had favored me with his intimacy. I also found in this place of large gossip, especially so in the time of the session of Congress, that the acquittal of General Wilkinson was received with disappointment by the Executive, and it was rumored that some charges had been made by an underling of the War Department (Mr. Simmons) adverse to the impartiality of some of the elder officers on the Court; but that President Madison would not consent to any such mode of impugning the rights of opinion, and that the charges were suppressed."

The imminence of war at last roused the lethargic Secretary of War, who directed Swift in March, 1812, to make a careful inspection of the condition of our seacoast defenses in Georgia, South and North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland. Having completed this duty and made his report in person at Washington, the President, appreciating his ability and energy, offered him, May 23, 1812, the command of a regiment, but Swift, preferring to do duty in his own Corps, was ordered to return and report to Major-General Thomas Pinckney as Chief Engineer of the "Southern Department," which position, as well as that of Aid-de-Camp, he held till Sept. 28, 1812—in the meantime, July 6, 1812, having been promoted to be Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineers.

Immediately upon being officially notified of the resignation of Colonel Williams as Chief Engineer, Swift, as next in rank, assumed command of his Corps, but he did not reach Washington till Oct. 21, 1812. His nomination was now before the Senate to fill the vacant Chief Engineership, but, much to his surprise, he learned "that Secretary Eustis was privy to a plan to supercede him in that office, by appointing, under the provisions of the law to promote without regard to rank; and that Robert Fulton, the distinguished Civil Engineer, was the candidate that he preferred. This sacrifice of the continued intimacy between Eustis and myself may have been just in estimating the relative ability of Mr. Fulton and myself, but it met no support from the President." Swift was unanimously confirmed

Dec. 4, 1812, with strong expressions of commendation as Colonel and Chief Engineer, to rank as such from July 31, 1812, the date of the acceptance of the resignation of Colonel Williams.

Pending his confirmation, Swift was ordered back to superintend the defenses of North Carolina; but before leaving Washington he sent orders to Captain Partridge, the senior engineer officer at West Point, to open the Military Academy (then practically defunct) in the coming spring.

Swift, when becoming Chief Engineer of the Army, and *ex-officio* Superintendent of the United States Military Academy, was but thirty years of age. Young as he was he had much preparation for his responsible position, for in Revolutionary times men have to think fast and act promptly, compressing years into days. He was born just at the close of the War of Independence; his childhood had passed amid the excitements incident to the formation of the government and its institutions; his boyish imagination was inflamed by the stirring events of the French Revolution; and his early manhood had been occupied with active duties, in a large intercourse with public men much his seniors, and in preparing for our second struggle with one of the giants of the earth. How he acquitted himself of the important trust now confided to him the sequel will show.

After placing the works on the Cape Fear River in good order and organizing a plan of defense, by militia and gunboats, for the entire Coast of North Carolina, Swift returned to Washington, March 2, 1813, to take upon himself the duties of his new

office. With General Armstrong, now Secretary of War, he consulted on military matters generally, and particularly upon the application of the large appropriations for fortifications. These arranged, he proceeded to New York harbor, where, on the 6th of April, he reported himself for duty to General George Izard, the commandant of the Department, from whom he received, as specially ordered by the President, the command of Staten Island, including a brigade of infantry (32d and 41st regiments), in addition to his duties as Chief Engineer and Superintendent of the United States Military Academy.

In the latter capacity he made frequent visits to West Point; arranged plans for new buildings (Mess Hall, Academy, and South Barracks), tracing their foundations on the ground in June; obtained authority to employ an acting Chaplain to be Professor of Ethics, History and Geography; remodeled the functions of the Academic Staff; and assumed the Inspectorship of the institution, to bar the assumption of authority claimed by Captain Partridge as local commander.

Having completed the repairs of the New York forts, and built a system of block-houses along the shores of the harbor to prevent a surprise from the British fleet, then anchored off Sandy Hook, Swift requested orders for the field.

On the 9th of August he was assigned as Chief Engineer of the Northern Army under General Wilkinson, and on the 31st reported to that officer at Sackett's Harbor. Here he found everything in a most disgraceful and deplorable condition; no

plan of campaign studied or definitely fixed; the enemy's positions unknown, and the St. Lawrence unexplored; supplies deficient through neglect or incompetency of the War Department; expense of transportation enormous, that of a single field-piece costing over a thousand dollars*; our troops mostly recruits, and sick from eating contract provisions; the army split into factions, with no one to harmonize discord; and authority a triple-headed Cerberus —Armstrong, Wilkinson and Hampton—barking and biting at each other with a venom disreputable to their profession and destructive of all success to our arms.

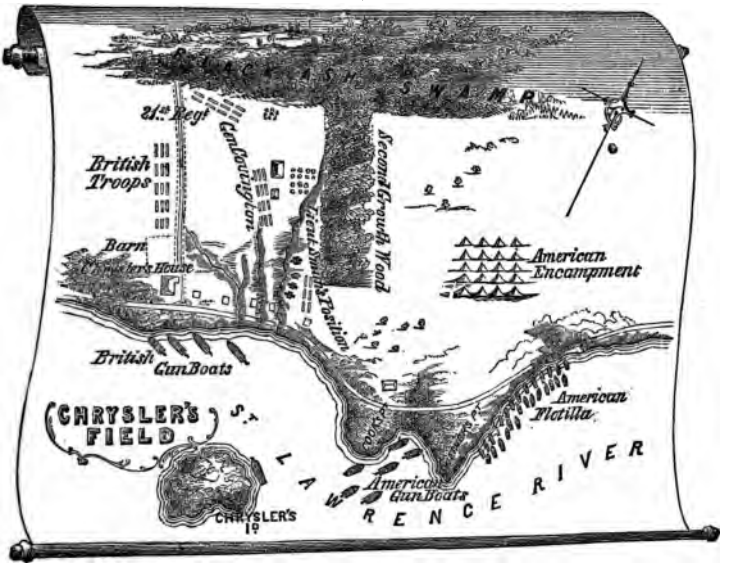
After holding various councils of war, which consumed precious moments of the fast waning season for active operations, it was finally resolved to rendezvous all the troops in the vicinity of Sackett's Harbor; in co-operation with Chauncey's squadron make a bold feint on Kingston; then rapidly slip down the St. Lawrence; and in concert with Hampton's division, moving north from Lake Champlain, capture Montreal. Swift thought that in two days, with a thousand men, Kingston could be surprised and the public stores burned, but was opposed to its attack should it delay the army's descent of the river. Up to the 19th he heard no more of an assault on Kingston, and as he had completed his reconnoissance of the head of the St. Lawrence, he proceeded

* The sum expended in building vessels for Lake Ontario was $1.869,077; that expended on Lake Erie $106.603; and that spent on Lake Champlain $296,320: almost $2.500,000 for mere ship-building. The expenditures for the conquest of the lower lakes would have paid for the transportation of a large army from New England to Halifax.

to examine the vicinity of Prescott and to prepare a plan of attack on that post, which was completed by the 31st.

After criminal delays and various mishaps, Wilkinson, with all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war, embarked, November 6th, from French Creek for the descent of the St. Lawrence, the flotilla of the foe rapidly pursuing. The next day our army landed to march through Ogdensburg, while Swift at night conducted Wilkinson's boat and the baggage past Prescott, under a heavy but ineffectual fire of the batteries. Though this peril was ended, new danger thickened. Before them were fearful rapids, the enemy's gunboats hung upon their rear, and British troops harassed them on every side and at every turn. So pressed was Wilkinson that, on the morning of the 11th, he sent Swift, who was his Aid-de-Camp as well as Chief Engineer, with an order to General Boyd to land, drive back the enemy, and capture his artillery. The bold Boyd, who had had a peculiar military career in India and had been distinguished for gallantry in the Battle of Tippecanoe, promptly obeyed. The British troops were well posted on Chrysler's Field, being drawn up in échelon order perpendicular to the St. Lawrence, the line resting its right on the river, the left upon a dense black-ash swamp, and covered by skirmishers and several rugged ravines, while seven or eight gunboats swept with their fires the whole plain in front. It was obvious that our main attack must be made upon the enemy's left flank. Accordingly, General Swartwout was

detached, with the fourth brigade, to dislodge the enemy's light troops in the open field; while General Covington, with the third brigade, was ordered to be within supporting distance. Swartwout, dashing gallantly through a second-growth wood, was followed by Colonel Ripley's 21st Infantry, which soon drove the British light troops back upon their main line. Here the victorious leader was joined,



on his left, by General Covington, when the combined forces beat back the enemy more than a mile. During this time the detachment of the first brigade, under Colonel Coles, delayed by deep mud of plowed ground and greater distance from the scene of strife, rapidly came into action against the enemy's left amid showers of schrapnel-shells and bullets. The fight now became more stationary until the

brigade first engaged, having exhausted its ammunition, was directed to fall back to a more defensible position to wait for a re-supply. This retrograde movement so disconnected the line, that the first brigade also retired. Unfortunately the artillery, from the broken character of the ground and consequent circuitous route it had to take, did not reach the scene of action till the infantry had fallen back; but now, placed in good position by Colonel Swift, the fire of our guns was steady and destructive.

The enemy, quickly discovering our disorder and slackened fire, pushed vigorously forward and endeavored by a flank movement to capture our cannon, when Adjutant-General Walbach, a German veteran in our army who had seen much foreign service, gave the order "to charge mit de Dragoons" and thus saved the pieces. The effort was renewed, and when, finally, the battery was ordered to retire, having to pass a deep ravine, one piece was unfortunately lost. Its gallant commander, Lieutenant William W. Smith, one of the early graduates of the Military Academy, was serving it with his own hands, most of his gunners being killed, when he too was mortally wounded and taken prisoner.

The whole of our line was now re-formed on the margin of the woods, when, night and storm coming on, Boyd retired, in good order and without molestation from the enemy, to the vicinity of our flotilla. In this spirited action General Covington was mortally wounded, and one-fifth of our force put *hors de combat*, and, though our troops were safely re-embarked, our dead were left on the field in possession of the British.

In his despatch to the War Department Wilkinson says: "Colonel Swift took the boldest and most active part in the action of the 11th, of any individual engaged, except Adjutant-General Walbach." The next day a letter was received from Hampton, declining a junction of his army at St. Regis, which ended the St. Lawrence campaign—Wilkinson on the 14th, going into winter quarters at French Mills, on the Salmon River, he having spent more days than it now takes hours in the descent of the river.

The genius of mismanagement seemed to lead our armies in every attempt to conquer Canada, for Wilkinson's campaign was, in execution, as abortive and discreditable as Hull's, and in design only paralleled by Amherst's absurd flank movement, in 1760, of four hundred miles to reach Montreal by way of Oswego and the St. Lawrence, when from the foot of Lake Champlain he was within an eighth of the distance, and on the true strategic line to reach his objective point.

Leaving Brevet Major Totten as Chief Engineer of the Northern Army, Swift, on the 17th of Nov., departed from Salmon River with confidential despatches from the General-in-Chief to Hampton and the War Department. After conferring with the former, he wrote to Wilkinson the exact condition of things, and gave him some admirable advice upon the manner of conducting a winter or spring campaign against Montreal, suggesting that the Sorel was the true strategic line of operation, as followed, in 1775, by Montgomery. On his way to Washington he met at Albany the Secretary of War, and

accompanied him to the capital, where he freely gave his views on the conduct of the war both to the Secretary and the President, which probably irritated the former and lost to Swift the just reward for his gallantry at Chrysler's Field. Instead of November 11, 1813, the date of the battle, he was not, till Feb. 19, 1814, brevetted a Brigadier-General, and then only for "meritorious services." Armstrong's dislike to Wilkinson, the friend of Swift, may also have had its influence, to say nothing of his unwillingness to become responsible in any way for the shortcomings of the St. Lawrence campaign.

This Campaign of 1813, as before stated, was in principle the same as that which had so signally failed in 1812. The chief defects we will now point out, but will not consider many minor faults.

Points of Attack.—The Invasion of Canada was undertaken at three points, on a thousand miles of frontier extending from Lake Michigan to Lake Champlain, by columns too distant for any mutual support. That of the Left, after long and costly trial, did recover Michigan Territory, but was useless as an attack on Canada in which it made no permanent lodgement; that of the Centre struck at several unimportant points, wasted a whole season in useless experiments, and accomplished nothing for the invasion of Canada; and that of the Right not only made a ridiculous promenade, but actually disgraced our arms.

Time of Attack.—As in 1812, there were no synchronous movements of our columns invading Canada. The Left entered the enemy's territory

near Malden, September 29th; the Centre captured York April 27th, and Fort George May 27th, and finally began the descent of the St. Lawrence November 5th; and the Right crossed the border September 20th, and a month after, October 21st, moved forward to its field of glory at Chateaugay. This want of concert of action permitted the enemy, of which he availed himself in some instances, to concentrate his forces upon our isolated columns.

FORCE FOR ATTACK.—Though our forces were generally superior to those of the enemy at the points attacked, there is no doubt that, had Harrison been left to recover Michigan Territory and small garrisons been placed to guard exposed points of our frontier, we might have massed our remaining troops at the outlet of Lake Champlain and, under a competent general, have marched to Montreal in May when the season was the most favorable, and thus have saved the disgrace of our movements six months later in stormy November.

ARMY COMMANDERS.—The experience of the former campaign had not impressed upon the War Department the importance of vigorous and able leaders to our forces who were still the Dearborns, Harrisons, Wilkinsons, Hamptons, Chandlers, Winders, etc., while we had in our armies a Brown, Pike, Swift, Scott, Miller, McRee, Totten, Wood, etc., in positions where they could accomplish but little.

CONDUCT OF THE CAMPAIGN.—Defective as was its plan, had it been conducted with spirit, resolution and promptitude, much might have been accomplished. Had the instructions of the War Depart-

ment been carried out by General Dearborn early in April of striking first at Kingston when its garrison was weak and the British fleet fast moored there in ice, the place could easily have been captured; the fleet burned; the military and naval stores destroyed or removed; an end have been put to Indian hostilities in the West; Upper Canada been severed from the Lower Province; and Montreal soon after have fallen into our possession. Instead, however, of accomplishing all this, our forces were removed to the head of Lake Ontario as soon as the navigation opened, thereby exposing our principal depot of supplies and ship-yard at Sackett's Harbor to a capture by the enemy's army and navy, from which, as by a miracle, it barely escaped.

The attack on York had no military importance as proved by our swift abandonment of it as soon as captured; and, though brilliantly carried, the results were a heavy loss of troops including their gallant leader, the escape of the British garrison and its commanding general, and the possession of some stores which were removed to Sackett's Harbor, and subsequently burned there through mistake of the naval officer in charge.

After a month more of unpardonable delays, Fort George was captured, but, as at York, its garrison and commanding general were allowed to escape. Had Colonel Winfield Scott not been ordered to desist from his hot pursuit, he could easily have captured the British forces. This erroneous order enabled Vincent and Sheaffe subsequently to shake hands in the mountain passes, retain the Niag-

ara Peninsula, and save an army which inflicted upon us another year of humiliation and disaster. Four months of the most criminal mismanagement followed, when we finally withdrew from the Peninsula for whose conquest we had wasted more than a whole summer, lost many precious lives, incurred very heavy expenses, and tarnished the reputation of our arms. We retained nothing except Fort George, which soon after fell into the hands of the enemy, who now being unopposed desolated our whole border from Erie to Ontario.

The failure, however, of the campaign on the Ontario frontier after the loss of so much time, men, money and reputation did not yet open the eyes of the government to the secret of our recurring disasters—the employment of effete commanders. It still persisted in its blindness in retaining, for the direction of the autumn expedition to Montreal, two old veterans who had seen much service and had thereby become as learned in strategy as Prince Eugene's jackass after making twenty campaigns.

Wilkinson and Hampton, instead of securing a safe junction within our own territory and then moving with their united forces by the shortest line upon Montreal, decided to depart, one from the head of the St. Lawrence and the other from the foot of Lake Champlain, each making a difficult and dangerous flank march in presence of our active foe, in the hope of uniting within the enemy's territory at a point and time not specified, thereby giving the entire British army the opportunity of falling upon and crushing, in succession, both of our isolated col-

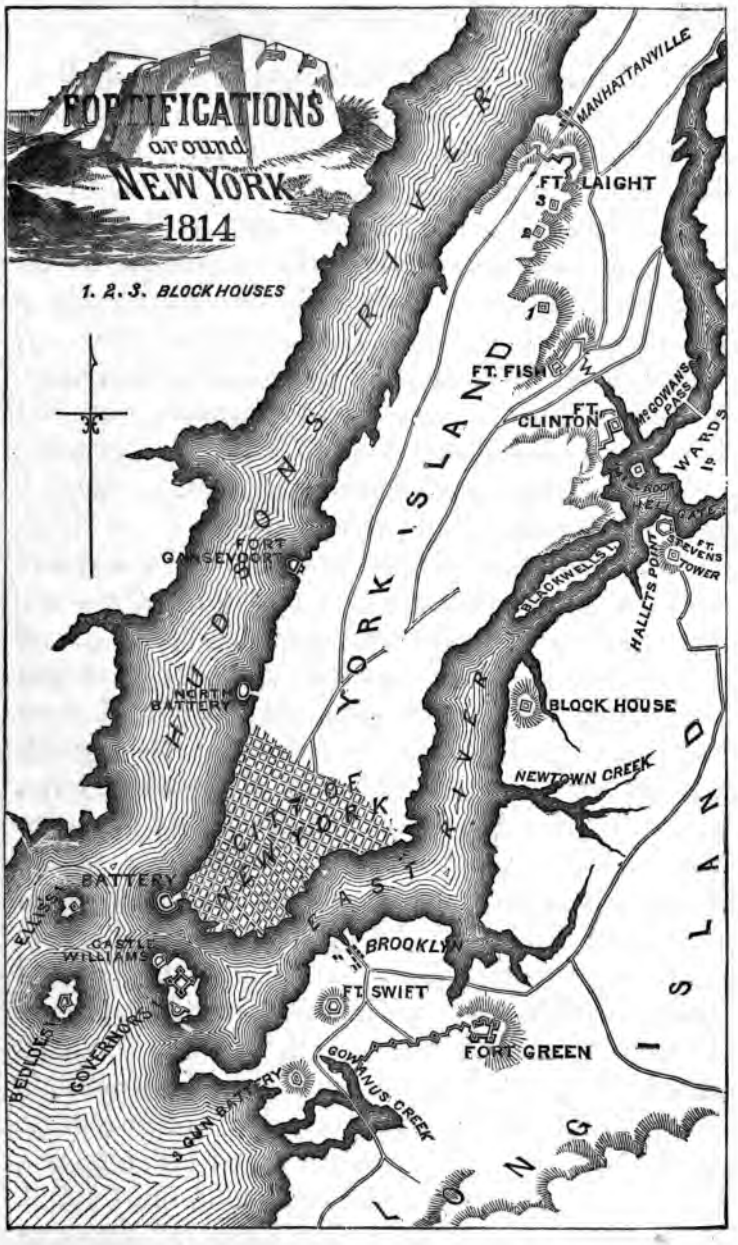
umns before getting within reach of mutual support. The success of either column must have been nugatory, without the same good fortune attending them both.

Thus ingloriously ended the second year of the war, in which our armies had been unemployed or misemployed along an extensive frontier at great loss of labor and character, thus exhausting the nation's patience, when less force and treasure, well directed, would have conquered Canada.

We forbear further criticism on this campaign, for we have much to say of General Swift, whose biography is the subject of this chapter.

Early in the spring of 1814, and in accordance with the wishes of General Brown, he applied for orders to take the field as Chief Engineer on the Niagara frontier; but the Secretary of War refused his application, on the ground that the Coast Defenses, which he then was inspecting, required his attention; but possibly a secret grudge against the friend of Wilkinson might have had something to do with his refusal.

Swift, early in June, in conjunction with the Committee of Safety of the city of New York, made a reconnoissance of the approaches to its harbor, and decided upon the necessity for lines of works to cover New York and Brooklyn from any descent upon our shores from the British squadron then cruising off the coast. The Manhattan line was begun July 15, 1814, at Hallett's Point (since so famous from General Newton's great blasting operations) by the construction of a work, forming the


FORTIFICATIONS
around
NEW YORK
1814
1. 2. 3. BLOCK HOUSES
MANHATTANVILLE
FT. LAIGHT
FT. FISH
FT. CLINTON
McGOWANS PASS
WARDS Ip.
ROOSEVELT
FT. STEVENS
TOWER
HALLETS POINT
BLACKWELLS
FORT GANSEVOORT
NORTH BATTERY
HUDSONS RIVER
YORK ISLAND
BLOCK HOUSE
NEWTOWN CREEK
NEW YORK
EAST RIVER
BATTERY
ELLIS
CASTLE WILLIAMS
BEDLOES
GOVERNORS
BROOKLYN
FT. SWIFT
FORT GREEN
GOWANUS BATTERY
GOWANUS CREEK
LONG ISLAND

right of the line, named Fort Stevens, after the Revolutionary patriot—General Stevens—a prominent officer of artillery at Saratoga in 1777. Two days later, ground was broken on the left at Mount Alto on the Hudson, the line passing thence, by McGowan's pass and the elevated ground that overlooks Harlem Flats, to Hell Gate. The trenches were opened by a detachment of citizen volunteers from the city, under Major Van Horn, a Revolutionary worthy. This short inner line was adopted because men and money were not at command to build a longer outer line. Operations were commenced, August 6, 1814, on the Long Island line, at Fort Greene (now within Brooklyn city limits), by a detachment of a thousand citizens. Soon there were from 1,200 to 2,000 working regularly upon the two lines, and 20,300 at call habitually under arms and sufficiently drilled to man the works, though not more than 12,000 of them were encamped within the intrenchments. Swift was appointed Inspector General of the whole force, and was virtually in command, he having to supervise everything, not only the construction of the defenses and their armament, but the providing of commissary and medical supplies. In a few weeks much was accomplished, gentlemen with pick and shovel working as day-laborers in the trenches. The enthusiasm of both youth and age was constantly stimulated by eloquent speeches, patriotic songs, thrilling stories, valorous deeds of our navy, heroic feats of the Niagara army, and last, not least, the news of the vandal destruction of the Capitol. By the close of November New York and Brooklyn

were safe, and the well-manned lines, bristling with artillery, bade defiance to the foe.

Swift's services were so highly esteemed that the corporation of New York voted that he was a "Benefactor to the City," placed his portrait by Jarvis in the City Hall, presented Mrs. Swift with a magnificent service of plate of forty-three pieces, and himself with a beautiful case of silver drawing-instruments and a large pleasure barge.

No sooner had Swift completed the defensive lines to cover New York and Brooklyn, than his talents and experience were called into requisition upon the board to form a new system of Infantry Tactics; soon after, upon the commission to reduce the army to a Peace Establishment; and later, with Colonel George Bomford, to decide upon the rebuilding of the Capitol at Washington, destroyed by the barbarious conflagration ordered by Admiral Cockburn of the British Navy.

The War with England being terminated by the Treaty of Ghent, Swift, in his new headquarters at Washington, devoted himself afresh to his duties of Chief Engineer, nearly a million of dollars having been appropriated for fortifications. He was also a member of the joint Army and Navy Board to select a northern site for a defensible naval depot between New York and Casco Bay.

Early in 1816, a disturbing element came sadly to mar Swift's future career. Notwithstanding the experience in our service of intriguing Conways and other imported charlatans of the Revolution, Congress, infatuated with an exalted idea of the

superiority of foreign military talent, authorized, April 29th, the President to employ a skillful Assistant, to be attached to the Corps of Engineers, with the pay of its Chief. Upon the recommendation of Albert Gallatin and the Marquis Lafayette, the selection fell upon Brigadier-General Simon Bernard of the French Army, a distinguished engineer under Napoleon, particularly as the constructer of the great fortress of Antwerp, where he so won the confidence of his sovereign that he annually called him to preside over the "Conseil superieur du Génie" which projected the entire defenses of the Empire; took him as Aide-de-Camp to Saxony in 1813; and made him Director of his Topographical Bureau in the Waterloo campaign of 1815. Upon Bernard's arrival in the United States, the Secretary of War, November 16, 1816, placed him at the head of the Board of Engineers, at the same time General Swift being ordered to assume the personal superintendency of the Military Academy. Whatever might have been the merits of General Bernard, this certainly was a cruel blow to a proud officer, who, for fourteen years in peace and war, had been so zealous and able in the performance of every duty entrusted to his charge. Swift, of course, protested against this gross insult to himself, and humiliating degradation of the Corps of Engineers, formed of native talent, expressly to avoid recourse to foreign aid; scientifically educated at our Military Academy established for that special purpose; just crowned with victorious laurels won in the campaign of 1814; and whose pride and emulation had built up a body of

officers of which any nation might well be proud. He called to mind how much the government had already suffered from the futile essays and serious blunders of military adventurers and imported engineers, and argued with great force upon the impolicy of entrusting our defenses to any foreigner, whatever his ability, whose interest was that of his own country, not ours, and who, in the event of war, might become our most dangerous enemy. However, having a courteous regard for General Bernard, and recognizing his eminent services in Europe, Swift suggested that his abilities and acquirements could be most profitably employed in teaching the art of war at the Military Academy. Under the law it was thought this could not be done, hence he continued, until 1831, upon the Board of Engineers. His talents and experience were doubtless of considerable value to our country; but it is questionable whether his magnificent ideas of fortifications, requiring millions for their construction, were suited to the wants of this country, separated by a deep wet moat (3,000 miles broad) from any European besieger. Certainly the Gulf works, Forts Caswell, Hamilton and Monroe, designed by Bernard, are less adapted to their sites than most of the defenses projected by our own engineers.

Swift's duties in the field during the war with Great Britain had much interfered with his direction of the Military Academy, but hardly had peace been proclaimed before he gave his attention to an extended organization of that institution. The first want being an efficient head, he recommended the

sending to Europe of two of our ablest engineer officers—McRee and Thayer—ostensibly to examine the French and Netherland fortifications, and purchase books to form a library at West Point; but, though not mentioned in their instructions, it was doubtless intended that by the study of the military schools of northern Europe they were to fit themselves to become, one or the other, the Superintendent of the Military Academy, there being much dissatisfaction with the officer in local command at West Point. The next want was funds to carry on the Academy, no appropriation for that object being then available. Failing to secure a loan for the purpose from the New York banks, Swift, with the sanction of the War Department, concluded an arrangement with Jacob Barker, a rich Quaker merchant, by which he was to advance $65,000 at seven per cent., thereby preventing the disbandment of the institution. Considering the condition of the "Public Credit," this was a highly patriotic act on Barker's part. This difficulty arranged, the old one recurred—an efficient head for the Academy at West Point. Captain Partridge, then in command, was a good mathematical teacher and a martinet drill-master, but a poor administrator, and unfitted from temperament and manner to control students and professors. Both the President and Secretary of War were much displeased with the conduct of affairs at West Point, and urged the removal of Partridge from command; but yielded to the solicitation of the Chief Engineer to delay action. Soon after, it was supposed the Gordian knot had been

cut by the resolution of Congress authorizing the employment of a skilful foreign officer, to be virtually at the head of the Corps of Engineers, though ostensibly under the orders of its Chief. Acting at Washington on that hypothesis, Swift was ordered to West Point, the legal headquarters of the Corps of Engineers, with directions to assume the personal superintendency of the Military Academy. This he did November 25, 1816, without making any factious opposition to what he felt was a gross personal indignity, and an illegal attempt to deprive him of his just rights as Chief Engineer. He made a dignified remonstrance against this procedure, determining in his own mind to resign his commission rather than submit to dishonor. For the seven weeks of his enforced banishment at West Point he went on in the even tenor of his way, attending strictly to his duties, and in no manner attempted to impede the public service; but, Jan. 13, 1817, he left Captain Partridge again in local command of the Military Academy, and proceeded to Washington to lay his grievances before President Madison, whose Acting Secretary of War—George Graham—had usurped Swift's functions in giving direct orders to General Bernard, without any notice to the Chief Engineer. This resulted in Swift's resuming his proper position in Washington at the head of the Corps of Engineers, and leaving General Bernard without any military control whatever, not even the Presidency of the Board of Engineers, which Swift had assumed November 19, 1816.

Mr. Monroe, with whom Swift had always had

the most cordial relations, became, March 4, 1817, the President of the United States, and John C. Calhoun his Secretary of War. The latter had unfortunately imbibed the common idea of General Bernard's transcendent genius, and consequently often thwarted the views of Swift when in conflict with those of the French engineer. Though at times greatly annoyed, Swift continued conscientiously to perform his duties, which were now much with the Board of Engineers.

Upon the invitation of President Monroe, Swift, as Chief of his military staff, accompanied him from June 1 to July 17, 1817, on his triumphal tour through the Northern States. During this gala campaign of seven weeks, Swift was not entirely absorbed with fêtes, processions and illuminations; but saw much of distinguished public men; visited the battle-fields of the Revolution and War of 1812–15; inspected arsenals, navy yards and fortifications; attended military reviews, and studied the capacity of the country for defense; and examined institutions of learning, particularly the Military Academy, in which the President was much interested.

On the occasion of this latter visit to West Point, it was decided to supersede Captain Partridge by Brevet Major Sylvanus Thayer, who began his distinguished superintendency of the Academy July 28, 1817. The subsequent return of Partridge to West Point, his violation of orders in usurping command, and his trial and sentence of dismissal belong to the history of the Military Academy. Suffice it to say, in this connection, that Swift's kind heart interposed

to save the fatal fall of his former favorite, who was at his urgent request allowed to resign his commission in the Corps of Engineers. We regret to add that Swift's noble consideration was soon after requited with the basest ingratitude. Partridge actually preferred charges of maladministration against his benefactor, who had saved him from the everlasting disgrace of being "Cashiered," as was his sentence; but the President and Secretary of War were so well satisfied that these accusations were malicious and false that all proceedings in reference to them were instantly denied, while Swift's accounts were promptly examined by the auditing officers of the Treasury and pronounced to be just and accurate.

The Presidential tour extended eastward to Portland, Maine, where Swift parted from Mr. Monroe, who expressed great satisfaction with the services of the Chief Engineer. He then, with the Joint Board of Army and Navy officers, made examinations, from the Penobscot to the Thames, of all suitable sites for naval depots. Soon after, he accompanied the Board of Engineers to the Chesapeake and its tributaries, to select sites for fortifications, and, with the officers of the navy, to locate a navy yard near Norfolk, Va. The winter putting a stop to further explorations, Swift availed himself of the opportunity to revisit North Carolina, where he was received with open arms and was much fêted by old friends.

On the 1st of April, 1818, he was again at Washington, and on the 26th of May resumed his

labors with the Board of Engineers on the Chesapeake. Being joined by the President and the Secretaries of War and Navy, they together visited Hampton Roads and adjacent waters; examined the scene of Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown; and partook of the usual junketings incident upon a Presidential tour. After further examinations of the northern tributaries of the Chesapeake, Swift proceeded to Washington, and from thence in September made his last inspection of the Military Academy, he being already engaged with Gouverneur Kemble and four others in establishing a foundry at Cold Spring on the Hudson. For more than two years he had contemplated entering civil life, and accordingly tendered his resignation, Nov. 12, 1818, of his commission of Chief Engineer; but expressly reserved all his rights as a Brevet Brigadier-General in the Army, to be called into service in the event of war. Till his death, he maintained that his brevet rank was held *in trust* by the President, to be restored on the occurrence of hostilities with a foreign foe.

Thus was a second Chief Engineer of the Army forced out of service by the injustice of our government. From the moment General Bernard was invited to be the head projector of the defenses of our coasts, the iron entered into the soul of the high-spirited Swift, who keenly appreciated the humiliation of his position, and, after wrestling over two years with his pride, at last felt compelled to sacrifice all his life-long anticipations of a soldier's glorious career. Soon after, the chivalrous McRee, who had won two brevets and the admiration of the whole

army in the campaign of 1814, mortified that his talents and services were deemed inferior to those of a foreign engineer, also resigned his commission. Major Totten, subsequently acknowledged to have had few rivals in his profession, would have followed suite had he possessed the means of living in civil life. Other officers of engineers were ready to do likewise, for their *esprit de corps* was gone. Was it then generous in our government so cruelly to wound the self-respect of these able and distinguished native engineers, either of whom, in character and talents, was the proud peer of the imported foreigner, as their past and succeeding records amply testified? Besides, was it good policy to take from the Bourbon army one permitted by his sovereign to enter our service, not from love to us, but rather that he might plan defenses against England, then deemed the common foe of both America and France; and was it statesmanship to introduce a Grecian horse within our Trojan walls, perhaps in time to be turned against us? It is a well-known historical fact that this same Assistant Engineer carried abroad the secrets of our coast defense, and became, in 1831, after the fall of the Bourbons, the Aide-de-Camp of King Louis Phillipe, and five years later his Minister of War. Can any one doubt, had we unfortunately, at this time, been engaged in hostilities with France, what would have been the course of action of her chief of the Department of War?

Bernard was doubtless an officer of much scientific ability, high military attainments, varied professional experience, and having been a favorite engineer of

the greatest soldier of the age, gave much weight to the deliberations of the Board of Engineers, and materially aided in the establishment of our national policy of coast defense, by permanent fortifications. He was also prominent in inaugurating such works as the Delaware Breakwater, Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and other of our important internal improvements. But, with all his accomplishments as an engineer and gentleman, Bernard, in the opinion of McRee, the bright particular star of our War of 1812–15, was "cold-hearted, not a man of genius, but specially suited for administrative duties."

Swift, the day after his resignation, accepted the Surveyorship of the Port of New York, not from choice, but as a means of living. Necessity knew no law; but how galling it must have been to his proud spirit thus to transfer his honored name from the Army Register to the head of a Molasses Cask. However, he continued his connection with the Board of Engineers till near the end of February following.

As a civil engineer, he was soon after engaged on various important projects, being, in 1819, consulted upon the feasibility of banking and draining the Newark Flats; in 1820, appointed by the Legislature of New Jersey to superintend the plan to open the Morris Canal improvement, in which he held a large interest for many years; in 1822, as one of three Commissioners to regulate the streets and drainage of the eastern part of the City of New York; the same year to explore a practicable route for a canal and inclined planes between Easton, Pa., and Newark, N. J.; and, in 1825, as a Commissioner

to examine the Bronx and Croton Rivers, to test their capacity to supply New York City with an abundance of pure water.

Besides these various professional engagements, he found time to make elaborate reports upon the duties of his office; in 1820, to be President of the Handel and Haydn, merged, 1823, into the Philharmonic Society, of which he was elected Vice-President; in 1825, besides being a Director of the Fulton Bank, to superintend the management of the "National Advocate" newspaper; and, in 1825–6, to become an Alderman of the City of Brooklyn.

Unfortunately his office duties and numerous outside avocations did not so entirely absorb him as to prevent his venturing upon the quicksands of Wall Street, where, with Henry Eckford, Matthew L. Davis, and others, he became connected with a Life and Trust Insurance Company, of which he was elected Vice-President in 1825. Having implicit faith in the integrity of Eckford, who secretly used the bonds of the Company for his own speculations, what was Swift's astonishment, in July, 1826, upon receiving a letter from the famous ship builder, announcing that the Life and Trust Company could not meet its obligations, and the next day to be served with a notice from the District Attorney that the whole Company was indicted for a conspiracy to defraud the State. At the opening trial the first question was whether a company, issuing bonds, and failing to redeem them on demand, could be deemed guilty of conspiracy or fraud, upon which the jury disagreed, eight to four. The

Court then decided that the trial of Swift, Vice-President of the Company, should be separate from that of the others. The testimony in Swift's case was brief and simple, his defense being in these few words of conscious innocence: "I know myself not to have been guilty of any fraud or of any design to defraud, and if this jury can find me guilty on the evidence, I shall silently submit as a punishment for my credulity." The jury in a few minutes returned with a verdict of "*Not guilty, but persecuted.*" The latter addition the Judge* refused to receive, when the verdict of "*Not guilty*" was alone rendered; whereupon a cry of approbation rang through the crowded audience, and Peter A. Jay, the adverse counsel, with tears in his eyes, went up to Swift, exclaiming: "This is a righteous verdict, and I am thankful for your acquittal." Subsequently the indictment came before the Supreme Court, which pronounced the whole proceedings illegal.

Pending these trials, President John Quincy Adams assured Swift's friends that, if he should be acquitted, he would renominate him for the Surveyorship, but when the time came, the promise was not fulfilled. Mr. Adams, perhaps, remembered that Swift had written a pamphlet advocating the election of John C. Calhoun—his rival candidate for President; besides, Swift, inadvertently, had failed, when presiding at a public dinner, to propose the health of the President—two unpardonable offenses

* Judge Ogden Edwards, March 20, 1849, declared in the presence of C. H. Hall and Henry Weston, that his conviction was that Swift's honor was not impugned by the testimony given at that trial.

in the eyes of Mr. Adams, not reputed to have much of the Christian virtue of forgiveness, as may be seen by whoever reads his "Diary," in which, of the proudest name of his own Massachusetts, he says: "Such is human nature in the gigantic intellect, the envious temper, the rancorous ambition, and the rotten heart of Daniel Webster."

Giving up all his property in Brooklyn and New York (now worth millions), to liquidate obligations of the Life and Trust Company, Swift, at the beginning of 1827, found himself without the means to support his large family. In the great City of New York, whose archives recorded him "its Benefactor," he could find no occupation, for his misfortunes had the usual effect of depriving him of influence as well as of property. Under these untoward circumstances he decided to move to a small farm belonging to his wife, in Haywood County in Tennessee, where he began cotton planting, and built himself a log cabin, with only one room, which had to serve for parlor, library, chamber, and dining apartment. Finding the title to this plantation defective, and his children suffering from the climate, Swift, in November, returned to New York, and the following year engaged in civil engineering, taking charge of the Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad in Maryland.

On the 4th of March, 1829, he visited Washington to witness the inauguration of the new President, when he so commended himself to General Jackson that he was appointed to superintend the Harbor Improvements on Lake Ontario, a position he held for

sixteen years, during which time his skill, zeal, integrity and watchfulness fully justified the President's sagacity and judgment in selecting him to perform these important duties, under the same department, over which, for years, he had so ably presided as Chief Engineer.

With the authority of the Secretary of War, while the Lake works were suspended, in the winter of 1829, Swift took charge of the construction of a railroad from New Orleans to Lake Pontchartrain, five miles long, through a dense swamp considered impassable, and which could be neither drained nor piled. This was one of the pioneer railroads of the South, and it is believed the first in America upon which iron edge-rails were used. Its cross-ties and stringers were of red cedar cut in the swamp, and it was ballasted with "fossil shells of the mounds," since so successfully applied to form the famous "Shell Road" to the Lake. It was on this structure, before the iron rails were put down, that the Hon. Henry Clay, the great champion of internal improvements, took his first railroad ride upon an improvised platform car, propelled by six men using iron-shod setting-poles.

Swift, in 1832, succeeded Benjamin Wright as Chief Engineer of the New York and Harlem Railroad; but, finding his administration of its concerns interfered with by the Board of Directors, he resigned the next year.

Hobart College, at Geneva, N. Y., which was now Swift's place of residence, elected him Professor of Engineering and Statistics. Though he declined

this honor, he accepted the membership, tendered to him, of the Society of Statistics, Paris, France. In statistical and educational matters, he took much interest. In 1833 he was requested by Bishop Wainwright and others to present his views of how far the West Point system of discipline and instruction could be adapted to a University to be established in the City of New York; in 1834 he proposed a plan to Governor Marcy, for Normal Schools in each Senatorial district of the State of New York; and it was through his advice that the Hon. Townsend Harris secured the services of Professor Horace Webster as Superintendent of the Free Academy (now College of the City of New York).

In 1835 occurred the "Great Fire" in and near Wall Street, New York, when, by request of the Mayor, Swift, at great personal risk, took charge of the blowing up of buildings, to arrest the progress of the flames; thus saving millions of property without doing any damage to neighboring houses. For a like service at Quebec, two years later, a young officer of British Engineers was knighted.

Though the supervision of the lake harbors continued to occupy much of Swift's time, he found opportunities, during the suspension of these works for want of appropriations, to serve as projecting, directing or consulting engineer of numerous private, company, city, state and national improvements, prominent among which were the Hudson River Railroad; the Solus Canal, to connect the Susquehanna River with Lake Ontario; the establishing of the Water Front of Brooklyn City; and his project

for a Naval Depot at the head of the Harlem River, which should be open at all times, both to the Sound and the Sandy Hook exits.

During this same period he declined the offer of President Houston, in 1834, to become a member of his Texas Cabinet; in 1840, he refused the Democratic nomination for Mayor of the City of New York; and 1841, during our northern border disturbances, was sent by President Harrison on an embassy of peace to the Governors of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, of which he acquitted himself to the great satisfaction of the government.

When his services on Lake Ontario terminated, he was offered the Chief Clerkship of the War Department; and, in 1849, the position of Commissioner of Patents was tendered to him. Owing to the expense of living in Washington, he declined both places.

Swift always interested himself in the passing events and movements of the day—hence we see him in 1824, presiding over a meeting in behalf of the oppressed Greeks; in 1835, the Vice-President of a Convention to promote Internal Improvements and Domestic Manufactures; and during the slavery agitation of 1850, he presided over a meeting to support Clay's Compromise Resolutions; yet, when Southern aggression so strongly manifested itself ten years later, he threw the whole weight of his influence against Secession.

As a Graduate of the Military Academy, he felt that his services were always due to his country in her hour of peril—hence, in 1832, he offered, with

a command of 1,200 young New Yorkers, to aid in the suppression of South Carolina's threatened nullification; in 1836, with a brigade of Sea Fencibles, was ready to guard our harbors against the anticipated hostilities of Great Britain; in 1846, was anxious to take the field in the Mexican War; and, in 1861, though verging on four score years, he would, if permitted, have drawn his sword in defense of the Union.

Though always ready for war against his country's foes, he was also a Soldier of the Cross, being a staunch supporter of the Episcopal Church, in which he held several lay offices, and was prominent as a delegate to several General Conventions.

Swift, though not what might be called a student, was well read, and a careful observer; could speak fluently, but laid no claims to oratory; and wrote tersely and with much force. Besides his "Diary," giving the prominent events of his life, from boyhood till he had reached over four score years, he wrote an account of President Monroe's Northern Tour in 1817, and of his own journey to Europe in 1851; prepared several brief biographies of deceased friends; and sometimes indulged in essays and lectures on literary, military and scientific subjects. His last recorded utterance was for the safe delivery and future prosperity of his country, just emerging from the horrors of four years of civil war.

Swift, in 1805, married Louisa, the daughter of Captain James Walker, of Wilmington, N. C., with whom he passed over fifty years of wedded

bliss in his own cheerful and happy home, encircled with a large family of intelligent sons and accomplished daughters. Surrounded with his Penates at his fireside, he was the most charming and interesting of companions, for there, in conversation, he poured out the hoarded stores of long years of silent thought, close observation and clear analyses of striking events, his memory being marvellous, and he having seen the stage of life with all its shifting scenes. His winning ways, courtly politeness and lively sympathies always insured him a cordial greeting and a warm lodgement in the hearts of the young, for whom he had a paternal attachment, and to whom he was ever a wise counsellor and faithful friend.

> "Of manners gentle, of affection mild;
> In wit a man, simplicity a child."

Soon after Swift left the army, the Corps of Engineers, to show their respect and affection for their late Chief, requested him to sit to Sully for his likeness, now hung in the library of the Military Academy at West Point—the fit depository of the portrait of its first Graduate, second Superintendent, and subsequent Inspector. Whoever looks upon that ample brow can read of the vigorous brain within; whoever peers into those benignant eyes feels there was a generous heart below; and whoever watches those expressive lips, sees hovering there only utterances of patriotism, honor, and manly pride. When the writer first knew him, age had silvered o'er his flowing locks, and his almost apos-

tolic countenance wore a saintly air, mingling tenderness, charity, and all the sweet offices of love and duty.

> "A man he seem'd of cheerful yesterdays,
> And confident to-morrows; with a face
> Not worldly-minded, for it bore too much
> Of nature's impress—gaiety and health,
> Freedom and hope; but keen withal, and shrewd,
> His graceful gestures, and his tones of voice
> Were all vivacious as his mien and looks."

At the green old age of *eighty-two*, Swift, surrounded with his fond family and attached friends, died July 21, 1865, at Geneva, N. Y.—full of years; full of honors; faculties bright and affections warm to the last; much lamented by the public; and sincerely mourned by a wide circle of bereaved relatives.

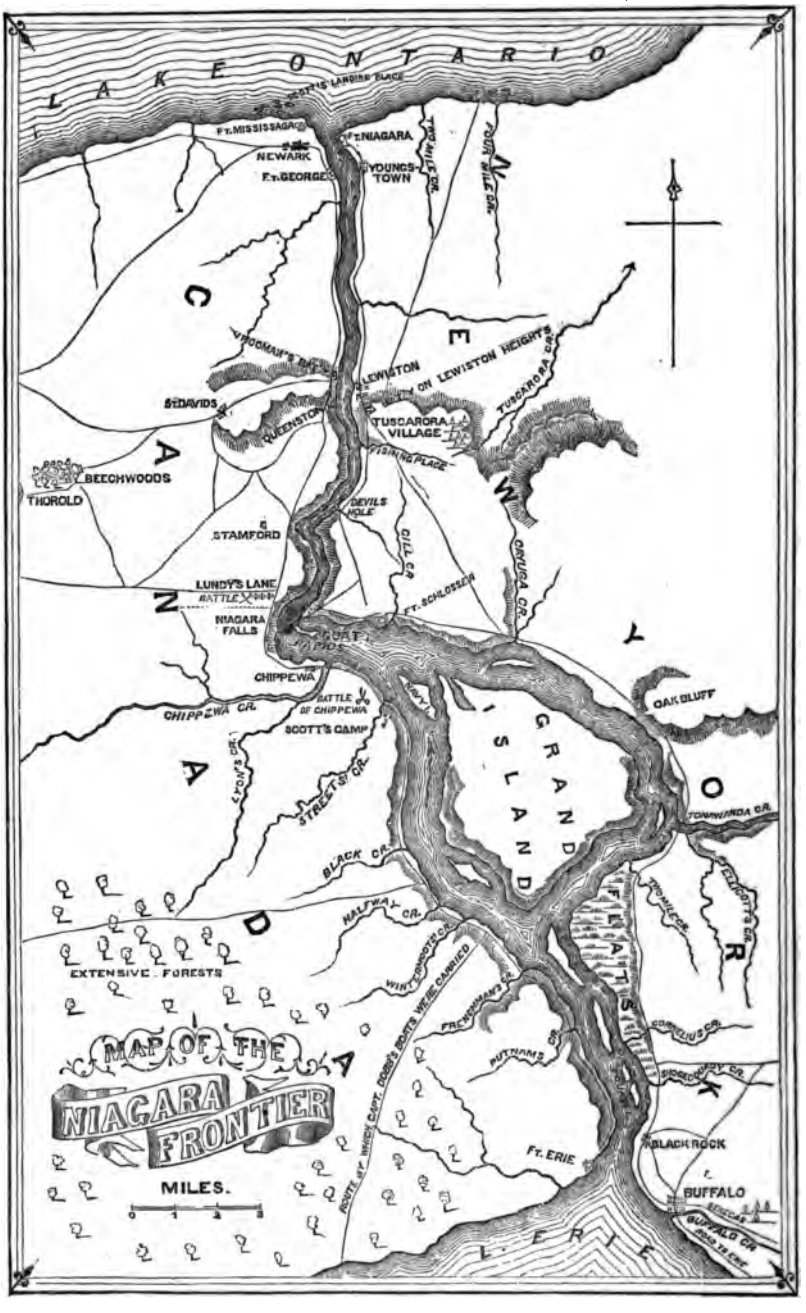
General Cullum, the Superintendent of the United States Military Academy, in directing, July 30, 1865, honors to be paid to Swift's memory, after briefly recounting his varied services, concludes his order as follows:

"Born at the close of the American Revolution, and dying at the termination of the American Rebellion, General Swift lived through the most momentous period of history, and was himself a prominent actor in the grand drama of our national existence. His military career began with that of the Military Academy, which he fostered in its feeble infancy; and he lived to see, in its developed maturity, the sons of his cherished Alma Mater directing the high destinies of his country on victorious fields in Canada, Florida, Mexico, and within

the wide domain of our Southern border. He now calmly sleeps, after a long and useful life of more than four-score years, leaving this world in the blissful consciousness that he and his brother graduates of this Institution have ably performed their allotted part in subduing the savage foe, in conquering foreign enemies, and crushing treason in our midst, and that he has left behind a regenerated fatherland of *one* people, with but *one* emblem of nationality, sacred to liberty, and the triumph of the best government on earth.

"The personal excellence of General Swift can be only appreciated by those who knew and loved him, and they were *all* whom he met on his long journey of life, for he had no enemies but his country's. Amiable and sincere, spotless in integrity, staunch in friendship, liberal in charity, General Swift was a model gentleman, a true patriot, and a Christian soldier, worthy of the imitation of all who, like him, would live honored and revered, and die universally regretted.

"As an appropriate tribute of respect from the Military Academy to his memory, there will be fired, under the direction of the Commandant of Cadets, *eleven* minute guns, commencing at meridian, to-morrow, and the national flag will be displayed at half-staff from the same hour until sunset."


LAKE ONTARIO
Ft. MISSISSAGA
NEWARK
Ft. GEORGE
Ft. NIAGARA
YOUNGS-TOWN
CANADA
NEW YORK
LEWISTON
ON LEWISTON HEIGHTS
TUSCARORA VILLAGE
ST. DAVIDS
QUEENSTON
BEECHWOODS
THOROLD
STAMFORD
DEVILS HOLE
LUNDY'S LANE
BATTLE
NIAGARA FALLS
GOAT I.
CHIPPEWA
BATTLE OF CHIPPEWA
SCOTT'S CAMP
CHIPPEWA CR.
STREET'S CR.
BLACK CR.
HALFWAY CR.
EXTENSIVE FORESTS
GRAND ISLAND
OAK BLUFF
TONAWANDA CR.
TONAWANDA
ELLICOTT'S CR.
FERRY
CORNELIUS CR.
BLACK ROCK
Ft. ERIE
BUFFALO
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MAP OF THE
NIAGARA FRONTIER
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CHAPTER FIFTH.

CAMPAIGN OF 1814;

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF

COLONEL WILLIAM McREE.

"PERSEVERANCE," says Shakspeare, "keeps HONOR bright;" but our government's honor, certainly, was not much brightened by its perseverance in false strategy after two years of aimless efforts without tangible results. Our military policy, instead of being active and aggressive within the enemy's territory, became eminently defensive in repelling petty partisan attacks, making the record of the past, to continue our quotation, "hang, quite out of fashion, like a rusty nail in monumental mockery." The enemy, it was true, was superior in the organization and discipline of his forces; had more of the practice, prestige and paraphernalia of war; understood the value of time in making assaults by prompt movements; and, above all, had the great advantage of occupying the concave side of the frontier and hence, generally, had shorter lines of operation to reach any point upon it than we on the convex side of its circumference. These disadvantages somewhat palliate, but certainly do not justify our persistence in error.

The disastrous Campaigns of 1812 and 1813, unfortunately, had not convinced us that our gladiatorial trident, of three isolated columns on a thousand miles of frontier, scarcely wounded the enemy; for, again in 1814, we renewed our triple assaults upon Canada. Three corps were anew to be launched against the enemy; the Right, under Major-General Izard, commanding on Lake Champlain, was to cut the connection on the St. Lawrence between Montreal and Kingston; the Centre, commanded by Major-General Brown, was to assemble on the Niagara frontier and seize the Canada Peninsula between Lakes Ontario and Erie; while the Left, under Colonel Croghan assisted by the navy, should proceed against the British on the Upper Lakes to attempt the recovery of Mackinaw and St. Josephs, and the destruction of Matchadach, a newly-established fur trading post supposed to be near the northeast corner of Lake Huron.

In our second chapter we have sufficiently detailed the operations of the Right column to render unnecessary any further remark upon it. The Left column, of about 1,000 men, July 12th, moved from Fort Gratiot; on the 20th, reached St. Joseph's, which was burned after having been abandoned by the enemy; on the 21st, Holmes' detachment destroyed a British factory at St. Mary's; on the 26th, Croghan arrived before Mackinaw, finding the work too formidable to be stormed and too high to be damaged by the navy's guns; on the 4th of August, our land force attempted an attack from a height in rear of the fort, which resulted in a sharp conflict,

chiefly with Indians, in a thick wood and the retreat of our troops; on Sept. 13th, a detachment, under Captain Gratiot of the engineers, destroyed the enemy's supplies, for six months, on the Natewasaga river; and, finally, Croghan returned to Detroit, late in August, after a six weeks' disastrous expedition, of no consequence even had it been successful.

Having disposed of the Right and Left columns, we will now confine ourselves to that of the Centre, which was soon destined to confront an army of British veterans, inured to war, which the pacification of Europe upon Napoleon's exile to Elba had released. Early in May the advance of these re-enforcements began to arrive in Canada, and, by the opening of the campaign on the Niagara, several of them and other regiments relieved from duty in the lower provinces, were rapidly moving towards the threatened frontier.

Major-General Jacob Brown, in February, had marched a division of Wilkinson's army from its winter quarters at French Mills to Sackett's Harbor. Mistaking the object of the government's orders, received here, which contemplated a movement on Kingston as the *main object*, and that towards the Niagara a *feint*, he, in doubt, oscillated east and west till the end of June, finally making his headquarters at Buffalo, where his subordinate—Brig.-General Winfield Scott—had established a camp of instruction. In the thirty years, since the days of the Revolution, our troops had never undergone a more thorough and efficient drill than was here practiced to develop their full fighting powers, and dis-

cipline them to rival sturdy regulars. By the first of July, Brown found himself at the head of a sufficient force to invade Canada and carry out the government's new instructions, which were—"to cross the river, capture Fort Erie, march on Chippewa, risk a combat, menace Fort George, and, if assured of the ascendency and co-operation of the fleet, to sieze and fortify Burlington Heights," thus conquering the Peninsula and cutting the enemy's communication between Upper and Lower Canada. The force assigned to Brown for this difficult task consisted of Scott's and Ripley's infantry-brigades of regulars (to each of which was attached an efficient train of artillery and a small squadron of cavalry), and Porter's brigade, made up of 500 Pennsylvania and 600 New York volunteers, with from five to six hundred Indians. The aggregate force was about 3,500. Of this gallant army the Chief Engineer was Major William McRee, assisted by the brilliant Brevet Major Wood, the subject of our third chapter.

William McRee was born, December 13, 1787, in Wilmington, N. C. His father—Major and Brevet Colonel Griffith John McRee—was an active cavalry officer of the North Carolina line, in the Revolutionary War; and his mother was a daughter of Doctor John Fergus, a distinguished physician of Wilmington who was of Scottish descent, had been educated in Edinburgh, and subsequently was a Surgeon in Braddock's army.

Colonel Jonathan Williams, Chief Engineer of the Army, while on a tour of inspection of the

defenses of Cape Fear River, became acquainted with young McRee, whose bright intellect, decision of character, and tenacity of purpose so interested him that he secured his appointment as a Cadet, April 14, 1803, to the Military Academy. Here the youth of fifteen displayed an ardent and inquisitive mind, a fondness for science, and a devotion to the study of the military art. He was graduated from the institution, July 1, 1805, and became a Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers, subsequently being promoted a First Lieutenant, Oct. 30, 1806, Captain, Feb. 23, 1808, and Major, July 31, 1812. Until the beginning of this campaign, he was employed upon the defenses of the Carolina coast, particularly at Charleston; from Sept. 30, 1812 to May 25, 1813 was Chief Engineer to General Thomas Pinckney, commanding the Department of Georgia and the Carolinas; in 1813, was Chief of Artillery (commanding four companies and the seige-train), under Major-General Hampton, whose failure at Chateaugay was rendered much less disastrous by the prompt and energetic action of the young engineer; in the first part of 1814, superintended the defenses of Sackett's Harbor; and, at the early age of twenty-six, became the Chief Engineer of Major-General Brown's army on the Niagara.

Fort Erie (nearly opposite Buffalo), garrisoned with 170 British regulars, was the first point to be attacked to ensure a safe footing for our army on the Canada shore. Dividing his scanty transportation between his two regular brigades, Brown, July 2d, issued his orders that Scott's should pass the

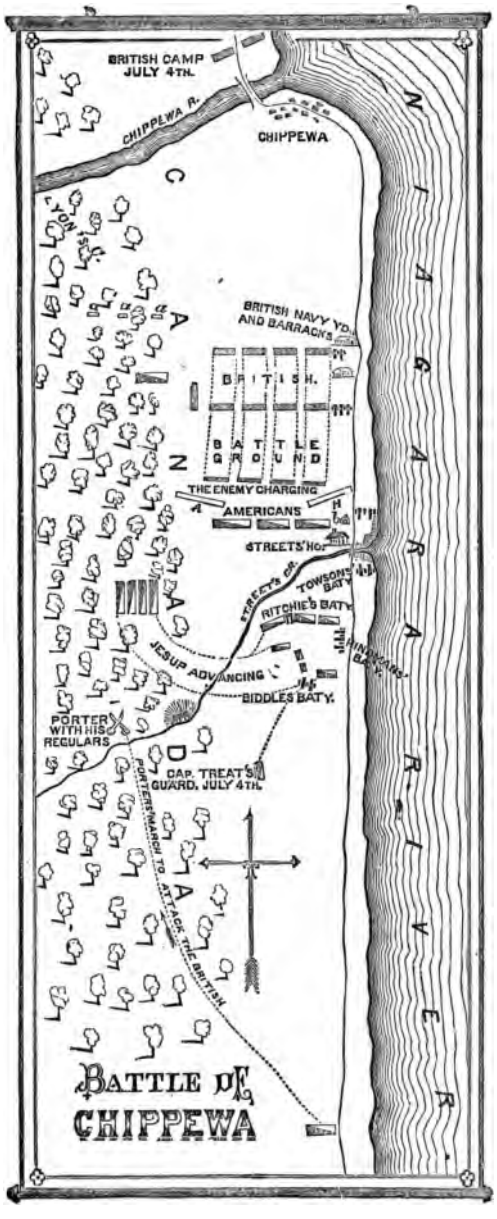
Niagara through the Black Rock Rapids, and Ripley's cross from Buffalo; the former to land a mile below, and the latter a mile above the fort. Scott, promptly obeying, reached his destination before dawn of the 3d, and was immediately followed by Brown, with his staff, the engineers directing the debarkation of the troops. Ripley's movement was reluctantly and tardily made, with remonstrance extending to the tendering of his resignation; consequently, it was broad daylight before his brigade was embarked. Scott, immediately upon landing, pushed forward Major Jesup's battalion of light troops and a few Indians, which drove in the enemy's pickets, and, under the guidance of the engineers who had been reconnoitring, invested the fort without waiting for Ripley. McRee and Wood now lost no time in crossing the ordnance, selecting positions for batteries, and mounting an 18-pounder on Snake Hill, when Brown demanded and received the surrender of the fort from its commander, Major Burns. The celebration of the anniversary of our Independence, the next day, was graced with its entire garrison as prisoners of war.

Elated with his good fortune and knowing the value of time, Brown, early on the morning of July 4th, despite Ripley's desire for delay, pushed Scott's brigade and Towson's artillery down the Niagara. For sixteen miles his march was a continuous skirmish with the enemy, till, finding the British strongly intrenched behind the Chippewa, Scott called in his light troops, and encamped for the night behind Street's Creek, where, about 11 P. M.,

he was joined by the General-in-Chief and all of his regulars. It was an anxious night, for few there had ever been engaged with a deadly foe. All, however, had confidence in their commander, and in their own prowess, for constant drill and discipline had banished fear from their thoughts.

The glorious and auspicious morn of July 5th, saw the hostile armies confronting each other, the British strongly posted behind the Chippewa, and the Americans covered by Street's Creek, while, between, was a full mile of level plain, flanked on the east by the Niagara, and a dense forest on the west. From early dawn desultory firing had been kept up between the opposing pickets, which, becoming very annoying to our left, our skirmishers fell back to draw on those of the enemy; while General Porter, with 300 Pennsylvania volunteers and about 400 Indians, was ordered, in the afternoon, under cover of the woods, to turn the light troops in advance of the enemy's right, fall upon their rear and cut them from their main body massed beyond the Chippewa. In executing this order, Porter fell in with a British outpost, which he soon routed, and was actively pursuing, when, in debouching from the woods, he encountered the entire British army advancing in order of battle which converted his forward movement into a disorderly rout.

Brown, ever on the alert, quickly divined, from the rising dust, that the whole of Riall's forces were in motion to crush him. Immediately he ordered Scott, then under arms for his daily drill, to lead his brigade, with Towson's artillery, across Street's



Creek to meet the enemy; and Ripley to proceed cautiously through the woods to threaten the British right, and thus produce a diversion in Scott's favor.

Riall advanced in three columns, his front and flanks being supported by light troops, Indians, and nine pieces of artillery. After an hour's furious fighting along the entire front of both armies, they confronted each other within eighty paces. The British line was broken in

several places, thus exposing flanks, of which advantage Scott quickly availed himself. McNeill's and Leavenworth's regiments, taking positions obliquely to the left and right extremities of the enemy's front, delivered their deadly fire with fatal effect, while Towson, on our extreme right, poured in his murderous canister and shells which blew up one of the enemy's caissons. During these operations along the front, Major Jesup, on our extreme left, hotly pressed by the British right screened by a log fence, advanced upon its flank in face of a deadly fire, coolly marching with arms at a support, and then, charging with the bayonet, routed everything before him. The enemy, pressed on every side and cut down by our unerring marksmen, broke and fled in uncontrollable disorder to the shelter of their Chippewa intrenchments.

Thus ended this glorious victory, fairly won, in which the American regulars, most of them on their first field of battle, with a force not over two-thirds that of the enemy, overcame the picked veterans of Britain; for the actual combat was essentially between Scott's single brigade and Riall's whole army. Our "gray-jackets" were at first supposed by the enemy, who was soon undeceived, to be Buffalo militia. The British officers subsequently remarked: "We began to doubt, when we found you stood firmly, three or four rounds; and when, at length, in the midst of our hottest blaze, we saw you 'port arms,' and advance upon us, we were utterly amazed. It was clear enough we had something besides militiamen to deal with." General Riall, though he

brought up the King's Regiment, the Royal Scots, and his best troops, in his official despatch admits that, notwithstanding their gallantry, "they suffered so severely that he was obliged to withdraw them." Chippewa was a crucial test of pluck between Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Americans. General Wilkinson, not likely to be partial to a junior who had superseded him, justly described this battle as being an "obstinate contest, fought on a plain and in direct order, whose simplicity presented few occasions for display of tactical skill; literally a trial of strength and courage, breast to breast, in which the American arms triumphed." Again the brave, proud Briton had found the same soldiers on American soil as their ancestors who had captured whole armies at Saratoga and Yorktown.

After Riall had retreated across the Chippewa, Colonel Wood of the engineers made a most daring reconnoissance up to its right bank. Finding strong intrenchments on the opposite side and the bridge over the river with its planking torn up and covered by a *tête-de-pont* battery, Brown, upon this information, encamped behind Street's Creek. The Sixth was employed in removing the wounded, burying the dead, and reconnoitring the adjacent country to determine the practicability of turning Riall's fortified position, which was too strong to be assailed in front. The result of the engineers' exploration was the discovery of an old, disused road leading to the mouth of Lyon's creek, a tributary of the Chippewa, which McRee and Wood made practicable, for artillery and the trains, in the course of the day. Early

on the morning of the 8th, Ripley's brigade and Porter's volunteers, with two companies of artillery, were directed to file off from the rear of the camp, march to the mouth of Lyon's creek, and cross the Chippewa to turn Riall's right; while Scott's brigade, with the remainder of the artillery, should threaten his front. Ripley, as usual, interposed delays when Brown in person took the command, so that it was three o'clock in the afternoon when the column arrived at the stream, which gave the enemy time to destroy the bridge across it. Our artillery was immediately placed in two batteries to command the opposite bank (occupied by a small picket and two guns) and, at the same time, to protect our workmen while constructing a new bridge. The enemy, quickly divining our flank movement which menaced the safety of his camp and communications, promptly destroyed his heavy artillery, abandoned his intrenchments at the mouth of the Chippewa, rapidly retreated on Queenstown, threw garrisons into Forts George and Mississauga, and with the remainder of his forces fell back to Twenty-mile Creek, designing to proceed to Burlington Heights, there to await expected re-enforcements.

Leaving Porter's command to guard the stores and repair the bridge at the mouth of the Chippewa abandoned by the enemy, Brown, on the 9th, pursued the flying foe, who, upon his approach, left his works on Queenstown Heights which our army immediately occupied. With the British forces either cooped up in Fort George or escaping to the head of Lake Ontario, Brown was now master of the

Peninsula of which he could have kept control had he not deemed the expected naval co-operation essential to his safety. Unfortunately, Chauncey was sick, the fleet blockaded in Sackett's Harbor, and there was no friendly ship sallying forth to bring troops or supplies from Sodus or the Genesee river.

While Brown, on his Queenstown perch, was sweeping the horizon for friendly sails which came not, the engineers were exploring the country around and their escorts daily skirmishing with the enemy. On the 20th, Brown moved to within about a mile of Fort George, which was deemed too strong to be carried by assault and our artillery too light to breach its walls. Under these circumstances, and learning that Riall had been strongly re-enforced with some veteran regiments, Brown, on the 22d, fell back to his intrenchments on Queenstown Heights. Here, a letter received from General Gaines, at Sackett's Harbor, dispelled the last hope of Chauncey's co-operation; but Brown resolving not to lose the fruits of his valor, decided to disencumber himself of heavy baggage, and at all hazards to push forward to Burlington Heights. To make this movement and replenish his stores from Schlosser, he, on the 24th, retired across the Chippewa, leaving a battalion on the north side to hold the enemy's old works, still entire and quite formidable. On passing Niagara Falls the enemy's light troops hung upon our rear, showing, as was conclusively proved the next day, his near approach in force.

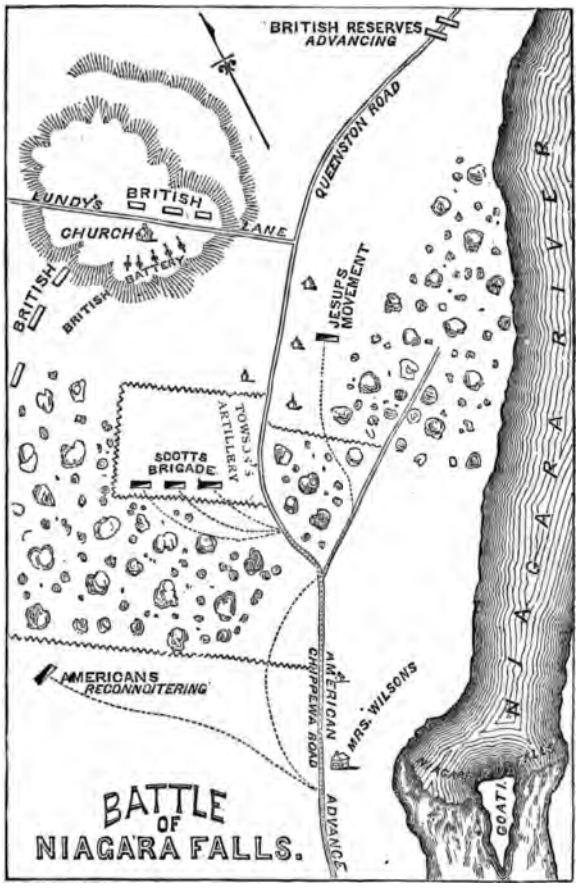
The obstinate, sanguinary and extraordinary night battle of July 25th, variously called Niagara, Lun-

dy's Lane and Bridgewater, was unexpected by both contestants, and not till noon of that day was Brown apprised of Riall's forward movement and of Drummond's landing with re-enforcements of some of Wellington's veteran regiments. At 3.30 P. M., news came that a thousand British, with four pieces of artillery, had arrived at Queenstown; were about to attack our militia near Lewiston on the opposite bank; and push up the river to destroy our principal depot of supplies at Schlosser. To divert their attention from the prosecution of this enterprise, Scott, then at afternoon drill, was ordered with his brigade, Towson's artillery, Harris' cavalry, and Wood and Douglass of the engineers—about a thousand in all—to move down towards Queenstown and show himself before the Heights, but was not expected to fight. With this small force, Scott at the Falls met the advance of the British forces, consisting of a squadron of dragoons and a few Indians, disregarding which he proceeded to Mrs. Wilson's tavern, near Table Rock, from which General Riall and his staff, engaged all day in reconnoitring, had scarce escaped. While Lieutenant Douglass, and then Major Jones, were despatched to apprise General Brown of the presence of the enemy, Scott's column, preceded by the dragoons, on its forward march was soon fired upon from a coppice on the right of the road. The column kept on through the wood, under a very heavy fire of artillery, musketry and rockets, in a manner worthy of the best disciplined troops. Passing this forest defile, Scott emerged into an open field to the left of the road

and at once formed in line of battle at Lundy's Lane facing the enemy, 2,500 strong, supported by nine pieces of artillery (6 to 24-pounders) on a commanding height.

Scott's position was full of danger: to stand still would be fatal; to retreat very hazardous; and to attack a force, double his own, and well posted on a field of its choice, was perilous in the extreme. Thirsting, however, for glory, and with the laurels of Chippewa yet fresh upon his brow, Scott hesitated not a moment to attack, trusting that the remainder of the army would soon arrive to his support. Quickly surveying the field with his glass, he discovered an unoccupied space of two hundred yards, covered by brushwood, between the river and the British left, through which he directed Jesup to force his way, gain possession of the Queenstown road and thus cut off the enemy's re-enforcements now approaching the field of battle under Lieut.-General Drummond. The Major's task was brilliantly executed, and among the trophies of his success were the capture of General Riall, several other officers, and 160 men—the number of prisoners of war about equalling his whole effective strength. In the mean time, the enemy attempted to turn Scott's left by a furious assault which was repulsed with heavy loss, and, after an hour's bloody contest, the British artillery alone stood firm. Drummond's official despatch confessed that when he arrived on the field, he found Riall's "advance in full retreat; and when his own formation was completed, the whole front was warmly and closely engaged, the principal

American efforts directed against the British left and centre; after repeated attacks, those on the left forced back, and the Americans gaining temporary possession of the road."



While Scott's little band of heroes, now reduced to one-half by death and wounds, was still keeping the enemy at bay, Brown, informed of the situation

and hearing the continuous rattle of musketry and roar of artillery, pushed rapidly forward, the brigades of Ripley and Porter, from Chippewa. About dark, in advance of their arrival, McRee, the Chief Engineer, hurried at speed to reach the field. Quickly reconnoitring the position, he stopped at the foot of the height upon which the British battery was posted. After contemplating it for a few moments, he turned to Lieutenant Douglass, of the engineers, and with his peculiar emphasis said: "That hill is the key of the position and must be taken." To General Brown, who soon came up accompanied by Major Wood, he made the same statement and more fully explained his reasons. So soon after as the engineers could select and lead the troops to the best positions to interpose those just arrived to cover the wreck of Scott's brigade, Brown ordered the gallant 21st Regiment to storm and carry the British battery. "I'll try, Sir," promptly responded the veteran Miller, its Colonel.* Oft and bravely, since the days of Tippecanoe, had he faced the foe, but never before had such a terrible task been given to him to perform. However, with his characteristic alacrity, he led forward his three hundred Spartans

* General Ripley's claim to the discovery of the importance of carrying the British battery and suggesting its capture to General Brown, is completely set aside by Miller himself, who wrote to his wife three days after the battle: "Major McRee, the Chief Engineer, told General Brown he could do no good until that height was carried, and those cannon taken or driven from their position. It was then night, but moonlight. General Brown turned to me and said 'Colonel Miller, take your regiment and storm that work and take it.'" General Brown in his manuscript memorandum of the Campaign, says: "The Commanding General rode to Colonel Miller, and ordered him to charge and carry the enemy's artillery with

to achieve a new Thermopylæ. Stealthily, under slight cover, he approached within two rods of the enemy's gunners, prepared with matches lighted to deal death and destruction; delivered, over a slight rail fence, one withering volley; rushed instantly to the midst of the battery; bayoneted the artillerists at their guns; drove back the infantry supports in a hand-to-hand struggle; and triumphantly remained master of the nine pieces and of everything on the heights, until Ripley brought two regiments to his assistance. "In the darkness of the night," says the British commander's official despatch, "in so determined a manner was the American attack directed against our guns, that our artillerymen were bayoneted by them in the very act of loading, and the muzzles of the American guns were advanced within a few yards of ours."

The British driven down the hill, leaving their guns and their killed and wounded in the hands of the victors, rallied at its foot for a new effort to regain the height. Meanwhile, Scott's torn brigade, reduced to less than half its strength by three hours of bloody battle, was consolidated into a battalion under Leavenworth, at Lundy's Lane. When information came that the re-enforced army was advan-

the bayonet. He replied in a tone of good humor that he would *try* to execute the order." Lieutenant Douglass, who was cognizant of the whole transaction, in a public lecture said: "I am correct in stating that it was first suggested to the mind of the Commander-in-Chief by Colonel McRee. The storming of the height had been fully discussed and arranged before General Ripley arrived. It was probably ten minutes after all this, before the head of the second brigade (Ripley's) arrived, through the opening of the woods, on the scene of action; and the order being given, the Twenty-first immediately took up its position for storming the heights."

cing to retake the battery, Scott led his battalion-brigade in an impetuous charge which put the British left to flight. Miller's New Hampshire heroes, firm as their own granite hills and supported by Ripley's closed ranks, reserved their fire till the flash of the stormers' guns indicated, in the darkness, the position of the victims to their unerring aim. Again and again the British re-formed and renewed the attack, at such close quarters that bayonets were crossed and the flashes of opposing muskets mingled. History no where furnishes an example of more desperate determination to do or die.

Drummond, now re-enforced with 1,500 fresh troops, led a fourth assault to regain his battery; but this forlorn hope was as unsuccessful as those which preceded it, though the British stormers far outnumbered the American defenders rooted to that blood-drenched height.

Thus ended this terrible night, whose wild tumult was only rivaled by the roar of the near Niagara's downward plunge:—a contest unequalled in this war, and in heroic valor, dogged tenacity, and dreadful carnage, rarely surpassed in the annals of our country. In this Titan struggle, we certainly can claim the higher crown of glory; for here the enemy's position was strong, well chosen and thoroughly reconnoitred; his arms of the best, ammunition abundant, and his powerful artillery admirably posted; his troops inured to war, many being fresh from Wellington's veteran army; and certainly he possessed every advantage of time, place and circumstance. Yet, in a prolonged battle of five hours,

mostly in darkness and on a field unknown to us, the British were beaten by half their numbers of Americans, few of whom, except at Chippewa twenty days before, had ever heard a hostile shot. Certainly there could be no more glorious and decisive victory; no more thorough dissolving of the charm of British invincibility.

After Drummond's last assault, the enemy exhibited, by his desultory firing in the woods, evidences of great confusion; while our troops, forming three sides of a hollow square covering our own and the enemy's artillery, remained drawn up in good order for more than an hour in undisputed possession of the field of our triumph. Unfortunately all, except one of our general officers and most of the other seniors of our army, were disabled, which devolved the command on General Ripley, who rarely in this campaign was found at the right time in the right place. "The enemy," says General Brown, "seemed to be effectually routed; his forces disappeared. In a conversation which occurred a few minutes after between the Major-General, Majors Wood and McRee, and two or three other officers, it was the unanimous belief that we had nothing more to apprehend from the foe with whom we had been contending; but it appeared to be admitted by the whole that it would be proper to return to camp. The idea did not occur to any one present, that it would be necessary to leave behind a man or a cannon. It was observed by Major McRee, expressly, that there would be no difficulty in removing the cannon by hand."

The battle thus being ended, and General Brown severely suffering from his wound, the withdrawal of the army to camp was left to General Ripley, which was executed in good order and without molestation from the enemy; but he had not brought off the enemy's artillery. "An hour after the battle," says General Brown in his official despatch, "I sent for him, and after giving him my reasons for the measures I was about to adopt, ordered him to put the troops in the best possible condition; to give them the necessary refreshment, to take with him the pickets and camp-guards, and every other description of force; to put himself on the field of battle as the day dawned, and there to meet and beat the enemy if he again appeared. To this order he made no objection, and I relied upon its execution. *It was not executed.*" Ripley, with his usual dilatoriness and perverseness, failed to cross the Chippewa till it was sunrise; halted his column at Bridgewater Mills, a mile from Lundy's Lane; and protesting against proceeding further, fell back to head-quarters.

General Brown thoroughly dissatisfied with the conduct of General Ripley on the night of the 25th and morning of the 26th, and his and General Scott's condition not permitting their taking the field, it was resolved to temporarily devolve the command of the remnant of the heroic Army of the Niagara upon General Gaines, who was at once ordered, for this purpose, from Sackett's Harbor.

While the wounded were being removed by water to Buffalo on the 26th, Ripley abandoned his strong position behind the Chippewa, which he could

easily have held till re-enforced; and fell back to Black Rock Ferry, where he would have crossed to the American shore, but for the firm opposition made by General Porter and Majors McRee, Wood and Towson. Still persisting in his disregard of his country's honor, Ripley left the army on the 27th to obtain Brown's permission to abandon Canada, in which he signally failed; was indignantly rebuked; ordered to occupy Fort Erie; and turn over his command to General Gaines immediately upon his reporting for duty.

The army was now encamped on the lakeshore just above Fort Erie, while that work and its extensive exterior intrenchments were, day and night, rapidly made ready by the engineers to resist a siege. Drummond's losses in the battle of Niagara were so heavy and his army so demoralized by defeat, that he remained quiet at Lundy's Lane to rest his troops and receive re-enforcements; hence he did not reach Fort Erie in force till a week after, of which respite we diligently availed ourselves in preparing for coming events.

The details of the Siege of Fort Erie we will reserve for our next chapter. Now we will only remark that McRee, as Chief Engineer, was untiring in pushing forward the defenses of the great intrenched camp of which Fort Erie proper formed an important part. He was present everywhere, day and night, supervising the construction of trench and battery, carefully reconnoitring all the surroundings, and with an eagle's eye watching the slightest indications of the enemy's movements. After Drum-

mond's fierce bombardment of Aug. 13–14, in certain expectation of an assault, McRee made every preparation in his power to meet it. Late in the night, to make assurance doubly sure, he went the rounds of the entire camp and gave such directions and counsel to the different commanders as the occasion seemed to require. "Be prompt and energetic," was his language to Douglass on the extreme right, "for you may be assured, that whatever else they may do, *this* will be one of their points of attack." Accordingly, while trusting the gallant Wood of the engineers vigilantly to watch the left, McRee posted himself on the right extremity of our lines (personally managing a six-pounder) to guard it from being turned by an assaulting column. As he had anticipated, the enemy made persistent attempts in the darkness, before the dawn of the 15th, to effect his object, and not till daylight and the terrific explosion in the bastion of Fort Erie had taken place, did Drummond cease his efforts to carry the place by *coup-de-main.*

General Gaines, then in command, in his official report of this brilliant repulse of the enemy, says: "To Major McRee, Chief Engineer, the greatest credit is due for the excellent arrangements and skilful execution of his plans for fortifying and defending the right, and for his correct and seasonable suggestions to regain the bastion." Again, on the 26th, he reported to the War Department: "Our position is growing stronger every day by the exertions of Majors McRee and Wood." During the remainder of August and half of September, both armies were

receiving re-enforcements and preparing for an ultimate trial for supremacy. The sharp rattle of pick and shovel, directed by our engineers, continually varied the booming bass of the enemy's artillery till the 17th of September, when Brown, who on the 2d had resumed command, seeing the impending danger of being overwhelmed by the superior numbers and ordnance of Drummond, resolved to sortie from his camp; if possible demolish the enemy's siege works; and destroy the fruits of his month and a half of unremitting labor. This brilliant final triumph of our arms, greatly "due to the counsels of Colonel McRee and Major Wood," terminated the Campaign of 1814, and compelled the retreat of the British army.

In his official report of Sept. 29, 1814, General Brown says: "Lieut.-Colonel McRee and Lieut.-Colonel Wood, of the Corps of Engineers, having rendered to this army services the most important, I must seize the opportunity of again mentioning them particularly. On every trying occasion, I have reaped much benefit from their counsel and excellent advice. No two officers of their grade could have contributed more to the safety and honor of this army. Wood, brave, generous and enterprising, died as he had lived, without a feeling but for the honor of his country and glory of her arms. His *name* and *example* will live to guide the soldier in the path of duty as long as true heroism is held in estimation. McRee lives to enjoy the approbation of every virtuous and generous mind, and to receive the reward due to his services and high military talents."

This brilliant three months' Campaign of 1814, in which our arms had so gloriously triumphed over superior numbers of British picked veterans in two sanguinary battles and a deadly defense against a stubborn siege, was in striking contrast to the sad fiascos of 1812 and 1813; yet, strategically considered, we conquered nothing except victory and a proud name for the spirit, discipline, endurance, and skill of the American arms. As we began, so we ended the campaign, without acquiring an inch of Canada; for the useless fort in our possession, when we retired to our own soil, was blown up and abandoned.

The prominent defect in the Campaign of 1814 was the scattering of our forces along an extended frontier, and making our greatest effort on the Niagara remote from the true objective point in any conquest of Canada. In conducting this, its most important feature, many grave faults were committed.

First: We should have invaded Canada by crossing the Niagara near its mouth rather than at its head, the former being nearer to our true objective point. Here a single successful battle would have cut off the enemy from re-enforcements; probably have destroyed his army; and certainly, at once, have secured the whole Peninsula.

Second: Placing our principal depot of supplies in the defenseless position of Schlosser, between us and the enemy where it was difficult to guard, open to attack, and in gross violation of military principles, for which we would have severely suffered at the hands of a more enterprising antagonist.

Third: After the capture of Fort Erie we were right in promptly moving forward to meet the enemy, but decidedly wrong in our mode of attack; for the battle of Chippewa was essentially fought by Scott's single brigade, instead of by the whole army. Had Brown thrown half his force, under cover of the woods, to actually turn Riall's right, when the latter was advancing to the support of his skirmishers, and, at the same time, have opposed his front and threatened his left with the other half, the British army would have been utterly routed, the Chippewa crossed, and the enemy's strong intrenchments have fallen that night into our possession. An assured victory here would have been decisive of the Peninsula campaign.

Fourth: After the battle, when the engineers reported the practicability of turning the right of the Chippewa intrenchments, Brown should instantly have thrown the mass of his forces upon the enemy's communications to cut him from his base and re-enforcements, thus to compel Riall to fight for his existence in a position of our own choice. Our delay, till the 8th, in crossing the Chippewa, saved the British army, enabled Riall to garrison Fort George, and remain master of the Peninsula.

Fifth: Brown, after crossing the Chippewa, should not have halted at Queenstown. With a single brigade he had beaten Riall, who, now weakened by the force thrown into Fort George, could easily have been defeated or driven from the Peninsula, leaving us free to occupy and intrench Burlington Heights. Thus we would have accomplished

the main object of the campaign in this quarter; been ready to meet Drummond's advancing re-enforcements; have moved, without serious opposition, down Lake Ontario; captured Kingston with the assistance of the garrison of Sackett's Harbor and Chauncey's fleet; and, finally, have triumphantly reached Montreal, the goal of our endeavors.

Sixth: Brown, fearing for the safety of his ill-placed depot at Schlosser on the 25th of July, wisely resolved to save his menaced magazines by threatning the enemy in front; but, unwisely, he sent forward an inadequate force, and, as at Chippewa, fought his bloodiest battle by detachments, in violation of all sound military axioms. With his united army he must have crushed Riall first and Drummond afterwards, and thus have gained, with half his actual losses, a decisive and crowning victory at Niagara.

Seventh: After the desperate night-battle at Lundy's Lane, when our army returned to camp for refreshment, there was no excuse for General Ripley's leaving the captured British artillery on the field. If his force of men and horses was insufficient to drag it away, he could, at least, have spiked and dismounted the guns; have broken off their trunnions and burned the carriages; or, otherwise, have rendered useless this battery, the after possession of which thinly veiled the enemy's defeat, and was of inestimable value in his subsequent siege of Fort Erie.

Eighth: When our army had returned to the Chippewa intrenchments, Ripley had no excuse for abandoning them; for we had, with inferior forces,

just beaten the enemy in a strong position of his own choice, who certainly, in his crippled and demoralized condition, could not have dislodged us from a fortified camp with which we were now familiar.

Ninth: Ripley's conduct in endeavoring to retreat to our own territory, before a beaten foe, was wholly unpardonable, and justly exposed him to the charge of moral, if not of physical cowardice.

Tenth: After the victory of Chippewa, and Brown had reached the vicinity of Fort George, the failure of Chauncey to co-operate with the army was the excuse, rather than the necessity, for not promptly following up and beating Riall before he could be re-enforced by Drummond.

Eleventh: General Izard's dilatory and aimless movements, from August 29th to Oct. 10th, deprived us of a large force in the campaign. Had he remained on Lake Champlain, Provost might have shared the same fate at Plattsburg, in 1814, as had Burgoyne at Saratoga, in 1777, when on the same line of operations he terminated his march by the capitulation of his whole army. Or, had he not proceeded to the Niagara at the slow rate, by land and water, of about eight miles a day, he would have arrived in time to have joined Brown's army and, with the united force of 8,000 combatants, we could have driven Drummond to Lower Canada.

McRee, when he became the Chief Engineer of General Brown's army, was only a Major; but, during the campaign, he nobly won two brevets—that of Lieut.-Colonel, July 25, 1814, "for gallant conduct in the Battle of Niagara," and of Colonel,

August 15, 1814, "for distinguished services in the Defense of Fort Erie." Throughout the campaign McRee enjoyed, in the highest degree, the confidence of the whole army; was foremost in the councils of every movement and plan; and, be it said, to the lasting honor of the General-in-Chief, he was, at all times and on all occasions, then and after, prompt and explicit in acknowledging his official obligations to his able, energetic, and brilliant Chief Engineer. McRee and Wood, says Brown in his report of the Battle of Niagara, "were greatly distinguished on that day, and their high military talents exerted with great effect; they were much under my eye and near my person, and to their assistance a great deal is fairly to be ascribed. I most earnestly recommend them as worthy of the highest trust and confidence." His estimate of McRee's services in the defense of Fort Erie we have already quoted. He freely stated that "McRee's industry and talents were the admiration of the whole army," in which he would doubtless have been made a Brigadier-General had the war continued. On the death of General Brown, February 24, 1828, a distinguished member of Congress, who enjoyed the confidence of the President, says in a private letter to a deceased officer of the army, now before us: "McRee is spoken of as a prominent candidate for General-in-Chief." Another hero, of another field of glory in the Campaign of 1814, won the prize; but few will deny that it would have been most worthily bestowed, with honor and profit to the nation, upon the Chief Engineer of the Niagara, who, to the highest science, military talents, culti-

vated mind, and eminent fitness, added a spirit, energy, knowledge of details, power of combination, and a genius for command equal to direct the largest army ever upon an American field.

General Winfield Scott, no ordinary judge of soldiers, said of McRee in a letter of May 31, 1843: "In my opinion, and, perhaps, in that of all the army, he combined more genius and military science, with high courage, than any other officer who participated in the War of 1812. I know that this was at least a very general opinion. If the Treaty of Peace had not prevented, he could, as I also know, have been made a general officer in 1815, and I am confident that he would in the field, have illustrated the highest grade."

Scarcely had the war with Great Britain terminated, when Colonel McRee and Major Thayer (subsequently the eminent Superintendent of the Military Academy) were selected March 20, 1815, by the government, to accompany Commodore Decatur's expedition to chastise the Algerine pirates who had been preying upon our commerce in the Mediterranean waters. Suddenly, April 12, 1815, their destination was changed from Africa to Europe, with instructions to visit the fortifications and military establishments of France and the Netherlands; and to purchase maps, books, etc., to form a suitable library for the Military Academy at West Point.

Provided with official and private letters to distinguished personages abroad, they sailed, June 10, 1815, from Boston in the U. S. Frigate Congress. On the passage they spoke the cartel "John Adams,"

from which they learned that Napoleon had escaped from Elba, giving them high hopes of reaching France in time to participate in the coming struggle for its empire. On arriving in the Straits of Dover these cherished anticipations were blasted by the fatal tidings of Waterloo and the disastrous termination of the "Hundred Days." Without stopping, they passed on to the Island of Walcheren and, after examining the fortifications, landed near Bruges. When they reached Paris, after its fall, the English were encamped about St. Denis, the Prussians occupied the Bois de Boulogne, and the Russians had only reached Vertus, where, with General Winfield Scott of our army, in the staff of the Duke of Wellington, they were present at a great review, by his Grace, of all the troops of the Emperor Alexander. At Paris, they daily saw the Allied Sovereigns, their well-disciplined armies, and the great evolutions and fêtes given in their honor—all of which produced a profound impression on these young and enthusiastic American soldiers. After these stirring scenes, they visited Metz and other military schools, examined the Netherland fortifications, and those of Lille, Cherbourg and Brest in France, and made important purchases for the West Point library.

Having performed his European mission with much credit to himself and advantage to the government, McRee returned to the United States in May, 1817, when he found he had been detailed, Nov. 16, 1816, as a member of the Board of Engineers to project the system of defense for our Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Upon this most important duty, which

called into action all his untiring industry, extensive acquirements, and deep study of the practice and theory of war at home and abroad, he was diligently engaged for two years; when, having similar views to those of the late Chief Engineer (which we have detailed at length in our sketch of Brigadier-General Joseph G. Swift) respecting the impolicy and injustice of introducing General Simon Bernard, a foreign engineer, into the United States military service, McRee, with crushed pride and wounded heart, resigned, March 31, 1819, from the army, in which he had so faithfully and honorably served from boyhood till he had attained the full rank of Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineers, and Brevet Colonel, U. S. Army. Subsequently, strange to say, one of the works, projected by this same General Bernard for the defense of Pensacola Harbor, was named Fort McRee, after his junior in rank, but his equal in knowledge and talent.

In this connection, we give at length the opinion of the very sagacious and eminent administrator, then at the head of the War Department. In a letter of July 12, 1843, John C. Calhoun, says: "I have great regard for Colonel William McRee. His talents and character were of the highest order. He only lacked opportunity to distinguish himself as a great military chief.

"When General Swift, who was at the head of the Corps of Engineers, received a civil appointment, I was anxious to place Colonel McRee in his place, in order to retain him in the military service. I knew he contemplated retiring. Colonel Armistead,

a man of great worth, and for whom I had much respect, was his senior. The step could not be taken with propriety without his assent. I spoke to him without apprising Colonel McRee of my intention. He had the highest admiration for him, and felt the same solicitude he should continue in the service that I did. He gave his consent without hesitation, accompanied by declarations alike honorable to Colonel McRee and himself. I communicated what had occurred, with my wish to have Colonel McRee placed at the head of the Corps, to President Monroe, who readily agreed to it. He had also a very high opinion of Colonel McRee. I made known to him the facts, but so delicate were his feelings, and such his esteem for Colonel Armistead, that it was impossible for me to overcome his objections to be placed over him, even with his assent. I know that Mr. Monroe participated in my desire to continue his services in the Corps, and when he had made up his mind to retire, felt every disposition to give him some eligible civil appointment. * * * * * * *

"He was a member of the Board of Engineers to take into consideration the defense of the country and report on a system of fortifications, with General Bernard. The latter was not strictly an officer of the army, but he had the pay and emoluments of a Brigadier-General. His position was anomalous, and excited a good deal of discontent in the army, and in the Corps of Engineers particularly; and it was thought by many it was felt by Colonel McRee. But he was not the man to make complaints; if he

felt, he never expressed any discontent to me; but always spoke highly of the talents and character of General Bernard, as he did, invariably, of Colonel McRee to me. They were both eminently talented and skilful engineers. I regarded Colonel McRee fully equal to the General, and his reports to the Department, when they made separate, will, I think, fully hold me out in this opinion."

After McRee's resignation from the military service, seeking the quiet pleasures of private life, he resided in the Western States, holding, for a short period, the position of United States Commissioner for locating the "National Road" west of the Ohio; and, again, under the Act of March 3, 1825, temporarily, that of the Chief Commissioner, to survey the western waters, and locate and plan the "Western Armory." His letters from the West, many of which we have carefully read, give graphic accounts of his explorations in the Mississippi Valley; his sharp struggles with poverty, for he had no money-saving talent; his sale of almost everything, even his much loved books, to defray the moderate expenses of his frugal living; his declining tenders of lucrative positions to which he modestly thought himself unequal; his noble disinterestedness to promote other's fortunes by the selection of lands; his devotion to his few warm, and steadfast friends; his stern integrity amid the most alluring temptations; and his continuous cheerfulness under the severest trials.

At last, necessity knowing no law and his last resources becoming insufficient for his stinted exist-

ence, he was compelled to listen to the persuasions of his friends and to accept, Feb. 22, 1825, the office of Surveyor General of the United States for the District of Illinois and Missouri. In the discharge of the duties of that troublesome and thankless office he continued till July 25, 1832, having been re-appointed in January, 1829. At the time of leaving this office his name had been sent to the Senate as a proper person to survey the boundary line between the United States and Mexico, but he never entered upon the duty. Broken in health, he retired to his congenial seclusion till May 15, 1833, when the Asiatic cholera at St. Louis, Mo., terminated his mortal career in his forty-sixth year.

Colonel McRee was a bachelor; small in stature; chaste and temperate in habit; and grave, reserved and almost austere in manner. When, however, he was interested in conversation his steel-blue eye lighted up his pale, melancholy face, he becoming eloquent, instructive, and earnest, even to being sarcastic; yet he was ever kind, considerate, and deferential to those whose opinions were worthy of respect. Winning the marked regard, and exciting the warm admiration of all within the sphere of his acquaintance, he seemed to withdraw with morbid sensibility from general notoriety. He despised sycophants and scorned demagogues. He possessed a highly cultivated mind, strong reasoning faculties, quick perceptions, firm convictions, and resolute will, making him a leader more than a follower of men. He was an omnivorous reader and studied the classical as well as modern models of men, Brutus and Cassius

being his heroes among the ancients, while Frederic and Napoleon were his modern paragons. Though military in his tastes, he did not confine himself to professional thoughts, for he revelled in history and literature, preferring the times and types of revolution, such as the daring Luther, the sturdy Cromwell, the fiery Mirabeau and the passionate Byron. He wrote but little, for notoriety was distasteful to him; yet the public archives contain many forcible memoirs from his pen, showing strong intellect, wealth of knowledge, marked originality, and close observation. His report on the establishment of the Pittsburg armory evinces not only a soldier's, but a statesman's views; and his remarks, in the New York Scientific and Literary Magazine upon the present resources and magnificent future of the "Great West," are pregnant with original and far-seeing predictions.

McRee was a modest, worthy and eminently distinguished son of his cherished Alma Mater, which had educated him for the service of the nation, for whose glory he gave his highest endeavors and the best years of an active life. The General-in-Chief of the Niagara Army, with just magnanimity, ascribed to McRee much of the eminent success of his command, and well he might, for his Chief Engineer in that memorable campaign of 1814, though only *twenty-six* years of age, was old in wisdom, the Mentor of the Council and the Palinurus of the Battle-field.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

SIEGE AND DEFENSE OF FORT ERIE IN 1814;

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF

MAJOR DAVID BATES DOUGLASS.

SPADES are TRUMPS in the Attack and Defense of Fortified Places; and the prominent players of these winning cards are Engineer Troops, technically termed Sappers and Miners.

It was to reward the whole French "Corps du Génie," in the person of its real chief, both by rank and merit, that the Grande Monarque gave the bâton of Marshal to the illustrious Vauban, who fought 140 battles, conducted 58 sieges, and built and repaired 300 fortifications. Prior to the wars of Louis XIV, infantry troops were detailed for sappers and instructed in their duties by engineers. So imperfect, however, was the system, that Vauban, in 1670, urged the propriety of a separate organization of 1,200 Sappers and Miners. In 1690, the first company was organized under the command of Vauban himself, who says: "To such a degree have I felt the necessity of Sappers, that I have always had reason to repent of not having more urgently solicited the creation of this company."

So valuable were engineer troops considered, that

they continued to be increased in number till the outbreak of the French Revolution. In the wars of Napoleon, which followed, there are innumerable instances in illustration of the delays and disasters attending the operations of armies not supplied with sufficient engineer troops; and, on the other hand, the advantages resulting from their services when ample in numbers and properly organized and instructed.

From the first to the second empire, the influence of engineers continued to be more and more appreciated. To the French military establishment there are now attached 8,000 of this arm of service.

Frederic the Great organized two companies of Miners in 1742; but previous to 1810, Prussia had no regular Sappers, for which neglect and that of her fortifications this country paid the forfeit in the disastrous campaign of Jena in 1806. Since then, Prussia has become a nation of soldiers, Northern Germany now having in her vast army nearly 11,000 engineer officers and men.

When Wellington went to the Spanish Peninsula, he wrote to the Secretary of State: "It is inconceivable with what disadvantages we undertake anything like a siege for the want of engineer troops;" and Colonel Napier says: "When the first serious siege was undertaken by the British army, to the discredit of the English government, no army was ever so ill-provided with the means of promoting such an enterprise. The engineer officers were exceedingly zealous; and many of them were well versed in the theory of their business. But the

ablest trembled when reflecting on their utter destitution of all that belonged to real service. Without a corps of sappers and miners to carry on an approach under fire, they were compelled to attack fortresses defended by the most warlike, practised, and scientific troops of the age. The best officers and private soldiers were obliged to sacrifice themselves, in a lamentable manner, to compensate for the negligence and incapacity of a government always ready to plunge the nation into war, without the slightest care of what was necessary to obtain success. The sieges carried on by the British in Spain were a succession of butcheries; because the commonest materials, and the means necessary to their art, were denied the engineers." Colonel John T. Jones writes in nearly the same terms of the early sieges in the Peninsula, and with respect to the siege of Badajos, adds in express terms, that "a body of sappers and miners, and the necessary fascines and gabions would have rendered the reduction of the work certain." Soon after this siege, a body of the Corps of Royal Sappers and Miners, created in 1812, arrived from England; but their number proved insufficient, and, for years, the British army struggled on with a most imperfect army organization. The engineer arm was gradually increased, so that, in the last year of the war, it numbered 1,730 officers and men. Exclusive of officers, the present force is 4,500.

Every military student acknowledges the importance to the British army of the vast Lines of Torres Vedras; the field works of Ronda; the intrenched camps of the Pyrenees, Bayonne, Toulouse, etc.;

and Wellington's preparation for his final struggle at Waterloo, just before which battle he employed 18,000 peasants and 2,000 horses under the direction of the engineer officers and men.

It is unnecessary here to exhibit the importance attached by other European powers to having well organized and instructed engineer troops.

In our first chapter, we have shown how Washington suffered in the early days of the Revolution for the want of instructed engineers; but it was not till May 27, 1778, that Congress authorized three companies of Sappers and Miners, which served till the end of the Revolution with efficiency and distinction, and were mustered out of service in November, 1783. To the present Corps of Engineers, separated from the Artillery March 16, 1802, there were added, Feb. 28, 1803, nineteen enlisted men, and, April 29, 1812, a company of "Bombardiers, Sappers and Miners," making a total of 113 engineer soldiers. This company did admirable service in the campaign of 1814 on the Niagara frontier, as we shall presently show, and was disbanded upon the reduction of the army in 1821. Subsequently, the necessity of recruiting such a body of men was strongly urged by the Chief Engineer in elaborate reports showing their usefulness; but not till May 15, 1846, was a company of one hundred "Sappers, Miners and Pontoniers" authorized, which so soon as enlisted, organized and drilled, was ordered to Mexico. It took part in the siege of Vera Cruz; attack of Cerro Gordo; the battles of Contreras, Churubusco and Molino-del-Rey; constructed batteries against Cha-

pultepec; and did excellent service at the garita San Cosme on the capture of the City of Mexico. Since, detachments have been detailed on various expeditions, and the whole company efficiently served in the Utah campaign of 1858. In August, 1861, Congress authorized four additional companies, and the whole five, forming a battalion, were attached to the Army of the Potomac. Their services, throughout the Civil War, were of incalculable value in throwing up intrenchments, bridging streams, preparing battle-fields, making reconnoissances, and instructing volunteer engineer soldiers, of which many regiments were called into service, soon becoming by means of their skilled labor and high intelligence, the most valuable adjuncts. In no war have more wonderful and daring feats of engineering been so expeditiously performed, than by our armies aided by the regular and volunteer engineers; such as the field intrenchments everywhere; the Defenses of Washington, with their 68 enclosed forts and batteries, numerous gun emplacements, and 20 miles of rifle-trenches; the sieges of Fort Wagner, Island Ten, Vicksburg and Knoxville; the formidable works before Yorktown, Corinth, Mobile, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg; the almost continuous lines and batteries from Chattanooga to Atlanta; and the remarkable bridge structures across the James, Chickahominy, Potomac Creek, Etowah, Chattahoochie, etc., the former the longest ever built by engineers in the field, and some of the latter reconstructed almost before the originals they replaced ceased to burn.

The five regular engineer companies are still retained in service, though the strength of the battalion is only 200, or about 1 to 60 of our infantry troops, while the proportion considered necessary in the Prussian army is 1 to 36, in the English 1 to 34, and in the French 1 to 33.

DAVID BATES DOUGLASS, son of Nathaniel and Sarah Bates Douglass, was born March 21, 1790, at Pompton, N. J. His mother, a woman of superior mind and high principles, carefully directed his studies till he entered Yale College, in 1809, from which he was graduated, with high honors, Sept. 18, 1813.

Like all young men of true spirit, "he desired to serve his country," then at war with Great Britain, "and, if possible, in the highest branch of the service." Accordingly he traveled, alone and almost unaided, to Sackett's Harbor, to make application to the Chief Engineer of the Army, for a commission in the corps he commanded. General Swift, seeing that he was a young man of high character and abilities, at once gave him a letter to the Secretary of War, then at Sackett's Harbor, which resulted in Douglass being appointed, Oct. 1, 1813, a Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. He was immediately ordered to West Point, and Nov. 3, 1813, placed in command of the company of bombardiers, sappers and miners. Here he spent seven months diligently studying his new profession and drilling his command, with which he was ordered, June 16, 1814, to proceed forthwith "and join the army under Major-General Brown."

Though the members of the company were taken by surprise, as they had been enlisted for duty at West Point, the whole, with hearty good will, set to work making their preparations for departure; on the evening of the 19th were on board of a slow sailing sloop for Albany; thence in thirteen marching days traveled 360 miles; reached Buffalo July 9th, and at once, without refreshment, embarked on the Niagara in a leaky launch; by midnight, with much difficulty, reached Chippewa; there joined Porter's volunteer brigade, forming the rear guard of our forces; and on the next morning reached the main army at Queenstown, where half of the siege train was assigned to the Bombardiers and fought by them, subsequently, to the end of the campaign. It is unnecessary again to recount the stirring events recorded in our last chapter. Suffice it to say that Douglass and his command were, in all emergencies, prompt, active and efficient in the performance of every duty entrusted to them as engineers, artillerists, or infantry. A more brilliant career, however, was reserved for them in the Defense of Fort Erie, before which General Drummond, after resting a week at Lundy's Lane and waiting to be re-enforced by DeWatteville's strong brigade, made his appearance with more than double our numbers, August 2, 1814, establishing his camp in the woods at a most respectful distance beyond cannon-shot. On the next morning began the investment of the work, Douglass himself firing the first gun at the enemy when he approached to reconnoitre our position.

Fort Erie was now a small and feeble quadrangular bastioned work, though something had been done by us to strengthen it after its capture, July 3d, and much more since the battle of Niagara. It formed the right of a large Intrenched Camp, enclosing about fifteen acres along the bank, twelve to fifteen feet high, of the eastern end of Lake Erie, which was traced and begun after our return to the fort. On the extreme right of this camp, near the shore, was a stone structure made from the ruins of a lime-kiln, named the "Douglass Battery," after the young engineer by whom it was built. This was connected with the gorge of the fort by a seven feet high parapet having an exterior ditch. From the left of the fort, extending some 800 yards in a nearly parallel direction with the lake shore, was a parapet of strong profile with a double ditch in front. At the southern extremity of this line of intrenchment, on a sand mound, called Snake hill, was "Towson's Battery," twenty-five feet high, for five guns. A heavy abatis covered the front of the intrenchments and enveloped both extremities of the camp to prevent their being turned at the water's edge where the lake was shallow. Three armed schooners also supported our left and guarded our communications with the American shore.

Colonel McRee being the Chief Engineer of the army of the Niagara, most of his time was absorbed in directing, inspecting, and taking general charge of the defensive arrangements of the camp. Lieut.-Colonel Wood, the engineer next in rank, in consequence of the loss of officers in the preceding bat-

tles of Chippewa and Niagara, had been assigned to the command of the 21st Infantry, which required much of his attention. Lieutenant Story, though belonging to the engineer company, was most of his time on detachment duty at Buffalo and Black Rock. Thus on Lieutenant Douglass, the only other officer of engineers, almost exclusively devolved the construction and repairs of the works at Fort Erie. His excessive labors are best to be inferred from his own words: "On the 2d of August, at evening, my own little battery, though not quite finished, was platformed and the guns mounted. I made my bed on the platform, that night; and, for many weeks afterwards, took no rest, except on the trailed hand-spikes of one of the guns, with an old tent spread upon them, and wrapped in a horseman's cloak."

Before entering upon the Siege of Fort Erie, Drummond saw the importance of capturing our batteries at Black Rock, covering our supplies and magazines removed from Schlosser to Buffalo; and the three armed schooners in the lake protecting the water approaches to Fort Erie from our depots on the American shore. Though, on August 3d, he failed to accomplish the first; he succeeded, on the 12th, in capturing two of our negligently guarded vessels.

That Drummond, with his great superiority of force, limited himself on the 3d to an attempt to take our batteries at Black Rock, and not attack our scarcely outlined camp, is only to be accounted for by assigning to the battle of Niagara its true char-

acter—a signal, impressive and decided victory on our part.

General Gaines arrived at Fort Erie on the 4th, and assumed command the next day to the great joy of the army, which, with reason, had little confidence in General Ripley. The enemy's fire was inconsiderable till the 7th, when his first completed battery of five pieces opened upon us from a distance of 900 yards. From this time, the cannonade became severe and unremitting on both sides; and, as the enemy's ricochet fire passed lengthwise through our camp, the engineers erected massive traverses at right angles to the line of intrenchments, which saved many lives. Despite the enemy's efforts, our works were carried on with vigor and steadiness, Towson's battery being completed on the 10th; the intrenchments between it and the fort, including two batteries on the line, had been much advanced; and the other defenses were in sufficiently good condition to protect the camp.

In the meantime, both parties had been re-enforced and every preparation made for the desperate attack impending. Drummond's arrangements being completed, his trenches opened, his batteries established, and his covering camp made defensible, he, on the morning of the 13th, opened a furious cannonade and bombardment upon our works, which was kept up till 7 P. M. of the 14th. Gaines and his engineers, thus apprised of the coming assault on the dark night before them, inspected every part of the works, gave explicit orders to meet all emergencies, kept one-third of the garrison in turn under

LEGEND.—A, old Fort Erie; *a, a,* demi-bastions; *b,* a ravelin, and *c, c,* block-houses. These were all built by the British previous to its capture at the beginning of July. *d, d,* bastions built by the Americans during the seige; *e, e,* a redoubt built for the security of the demi-bastions, *a, a.*

B, the American camp, secured on the right by the line *g,* the Douglass Battery, *i,* and Fort Erie; on the left, and in front, by the lines, *f, f, f,* and batteries on the extreme right and left of them. That on the right, immediately under the letter L in the words LEVEL PLAIN, is Towson's; *h, h,* etc., camp traverses; *n,* main traverse; *o,* magazine traverse, covering also the head-quarters of General Gaines; *p,* hospital traverse; *q,* grand parade and provost-guard traverse; *r,* General Brown's head-quarters; *s,* a drain; *t,* road from Chippewa up the lake.

C, the encampment of Volunteers outside of the intrenchments, who joined the army a few days before the sortie.

D, D, the British works. 1, 2, 3, their first, second, and third battery; *v,* the route of Porter, with the left column, to attack the British right flank on the 17th; *x,* the ravine, and route of Miller's command.

arms, and made every preparation to guard against the expected blow. At this time, Lieutenant Douglass commanded his own battery on the right; Captain Williams, Fort Erie proper; Captain Towson, his battery on Snake hill; Captains Biddle and Fanning, the two batteries well situated on the front intrenchments; and Lieut.-Colonel Wood, with the 21st infantry, the extreme left; while the remainder of Scott's veteran brigade, under Colonel Aspinwall, was posted, in support, on the right; Ripley's brigade, on the left; and Porter's volunteers occupied the centre.

Midnight came undisturbed and calm; but it was the lull before the tempest. Already three British assaulting columns were preparing for their deadly errand. One, 1,400 strong, under Lieut.-Colonel Fisher, was to assail our left; the second, of about 700, commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Drummond, was to attack Fort Erie; and the third, numbering 750, led by Colonel Scott, was to turn our right. At half-past two, on the morning of the 15th, the storm first burst upon our left; but, no sooner were our pickets driven in, than a sheet of flame from Towson's artillery and Wood's infantry disclosed the enemy's advance to within ten feet of our lines, and soon after, making an effort to turn the abatis by wading breast-deep through the lake. After a desperate struggle, the enemy was repulsed; but, rallying, again and again, the attack was renewed, till five times failing to gain any advantage and being terribly cut up by our murderous fire, Fisher finally abandoned the enterprise.

Near to three o'clock our pickets on the right retreated and soon was heard the measured tread of Scott's column of attack, moving to penetrate the camp by the intervals between the fort and the extreme right. Soon the flash of Douglass' and McRee's guns, loaded heavily with grape, canister and musket-balls, made darkness visible, plowed furrows through the moving mass, and finally repulsed the brave Britons who, failing to scale or break through our works, retired discomfited, at day-break, to join their reserve near the woods.

Colonel Drummond, simultaneously with the assault of Scott on our right, with daring courage approached every assailable point of Fort Erie proper, endeavoring to carry it by escalade. Thrice he led his sanguinary followers up the parapet, but was thrice repulsed with great carnage. Desperate to gain the fort, which six weeks before the British had lost, some hundred of the boldest of the Royal Artillery, under cover of the low hanging smoke, stole silently around the ditch, with great celerity mounted the parapet, and gained a sure footing in the bastion before they could be dislodged. Goaded to madness by his losses, Drummond gave orders to show no mercy to the "damned Yankees." Many of our men were inhumanly slaughtered. The gallant Lieutenant Macdonough, severely wounded while defending himself with a handspike and pleading for his life, was murdered by Drummond's own hand, but the wretch soon paid the forfeit of his barbarity, being shot by one of our soldiers through the heart, while the cry of "no quarter" was

still on his lips. The noble commander of the fort, Captain Williams,* was also mortally wounded, dying in an hour.

Re-enforcements were now brought up on our side, and repeated attempts having failed, a more furious charge was to be made to dislodge the enemy from the bastion of Fort Erie. "To this enterprise, then," says Douglass, "the only thing now remaining to complete the repulse of the enemy, the attention of every beholder was most anxiously bent.

CAPTAIN ALEXANDER JOHN WILLIAMS was the oldest son of Colonel Jonathan Williams, the first Chief of the present Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army. He was born October 10, 1790, in Philadelphia, Pa.; entered the Military Academy, as a Cadet, July 9, 1806; and was graduated from that institution, and promoted March 1, 1811, to be a Second Lieutenant of Engineers. He continued on duty at West Point till 1812, when he was ordered to superintend the construction of Fort Mifflin, Pa., and while there was promoted, July 1, 1812, to a First Lieutenancy. Believing that he would see more active service, and be more rapidly advanced in the Artillery, during the War now declared against Great Britain, he asked for a transfer to that corps, in which he was commissioned a Captain, March 17, 1813. His residence of over a year on the low lands of the Delaware River, at this time had brought on a dangerous fever, yet, so anxious was he to share the honors and perils of the campaign of 1814, that, before he was convalescent, he applied to be ordered to the Niagara army, which he joined in time to take part in the Defense of Fort Erie. Here his abilities were so conspicuous that he was selected for the important command of the old work before the assault was made upon it. Thrice, on the morning of August 15, 1814, had he repulsed the enemy, and, when a fourth desperate assault was being made upon the bastion of the fort, he perceived a lighted port fire in front of the enemy, enabling them to direct their fire with great precision. Instantly he sprang forward, cut it off with his sword, and in the act fell mortally wounded—thus nobly sacrificing himself to save his men. So perished this gallant and accomplished officer, not twenty-four years old, sincerely lamented by his friends for his private worth, and deeply regretted by the whole army, with which he was a favorite. Though ambitious of distinction, he was perfectly unassuming; with laudable spirit, he was indefatigable in the discharge of every duty; and, by his intelligence, zeal and exemplary deportment, won the esteem and applause, not only of his subordinates, but of every superior in command.

The firing within the fort had already begun to slacken, as if to give place to the charging party; the next moment was to give us the clang of weapons in deadly strife. But, suddenly, every sound was hushed by the sense of an unnatural tremor beneath our feet, like the first heave of an earthquake; and, almost at the same instant, the centre of the bastion burst up, with a terrific explosion; and a jet of flame, mingling with fragments of timber, earth, stone, and bodies of men, rose to the height of one or two hundred feet in the air, and fell in showers of ruin, to a great distance, all around. One of my men was killed by the falling timber."

This destruction and appalling explosion of our ammunition chest (not a magazine or mine as has been often stated) struck such panic among the enemy that the surviving British officers could not rally their men. Biddle, though wounded, now, with his guns, enfiladed the glacis and esplanade in front of Fort Erie, while Fanning's battery dealt terrible execution upon the enemy flying, in complete disorder and dismay, with the loss of nearly a thousand in killed, wounded, and prisoners, or twelve times that of ours, which was but eighty-four.

It was now broad daylight, and the contest was over; but what a scene of carnage presented itself! "At every point," says Douglass, "where the battle had raged, were strewed the melancholy vestiges of the recent terrible conflict. There is the ruined bastion, the scene of such desperate strife, smoking with the recent explosion, and, all around it, the

ground covered with the bodies of the dead and wounded—the former in every stage and state of mutilation. Near the bastion lay the dead body of a noble-looking man, Colonel Drummond, the leader of the British charge at that point; his countenance was stern, fixed and commanding in death. In front of our fires, between the bastion and the water, the ground was literally *piled* with dead."

General Gaines, in his official despatch to the War Department, says of this "handsome victory": "The Ninth, under the command of Captain Edmund Fisher, was actively engaged against the left of the enemy, and, with the aid of Lieutenant Douglass' corps of bombardiers, commanding the water battery, and of that of the volunteers, under Captains Broughton and Harding, effected their repulse." Again, writing in 1815, he says: "Among the many brilliant scenes, which combined to dispel the clouds and light up the darkness of that memorable morning, the defense of the Douglass battery stands rivalled by few, and, according to the number of guns, surpassed by none. The youthful commander of that battery excited my admiration. His constancy and courage during a brisk cannonade and bombardment of several weeks, often in the night as well as in the day; his gallantry and good conduct in the defense against a vigorous assault by a vast superiority of numbers, are incidents which cannot cease to be cherished in my memory, as among the most heroic and pleasing I have ever witnessed."

While we were much elated with victory, the enemy was correspondingly depressed by his defeat

and severe losses of about one-fourth of his whole force. This gave us a few days respite from his artillery fire, of which we made diligent use in rapidly repairing the damaged bastion, completing the unfinished intrenchments, strengthening weak points, closing openings, renewing the abatis, adding new defenses around Fort Erie, making fraises of pikes to the parapets, and improving our condition generally.

In the meantime the enemy was not idle, though their fire was suspended. They extended their intrenchments and constructed a new battery, which, with the one already erected, opened a terrible fire, on the 21st, of from 200 to 500 shots per day. Ten days later, their intrenchments had been pushed far to their right and a third battery, constructed at 500 yards, greatly retarded, by its fire, our work on Fort Erie, necessitating much to be done in the night; but, notwithstanding, our defenses were quite complete and all the guns mounted before the middle of September.

In consequence of Gaines' recent wound and Ripley's unpopularity with the army, General Brown, though still feeble, resumed command September 2d. Seeing the pertinacity of the enemy, the rapid progress of his works, his accessions of new regiments, and despairing of being himself re-enforced by Izard, the Commanding General heroically resolved to save his army, or perish in the attempt. After careful inquiry Brown found that the British camp was two miles distant and encircled by thick woods; that the British army was divided into three bri-

gades, each of 1,200 to 1,500 infantry besides their artillery; that one of these, in turn, formed the daily support to the siege works, then advanced to within 400 to 500 yards of Fort Erie; that the heavy equinoctial storms had flooded the country, producing much typhoid fever in Drummond's command; and that all indications foretold a new assault upon his intrenchments more formidable than the last which had been so signally defeated. Carefully weighing all things, and consulting his most trusted advisers, he decided that his best defense was in offense, though he was far inferior in force to the enemy. He resolved to make a bold sortie upon the foe, "storm the batteries, destroy the cannon, and roughly handle the brigade on duty before those in reserve could be brought into action" from their distant camp. Making his preparations with great secrecy, fatigue-parties under able officers were sent, on the 16th, to mark a road through the swampy and wooded ground before our camp, which, undiscovered, succeeded in turning the right and getting in rear of the enemy's batteries; while a small ravine, running from about the middle of our intrenchments to the edge of the forest, was explored.

Everything being favorable, the sky cloudy, and the atmosphere thick with drizzling rain, our troops, on the morning of the 17th, were paraded for the daring attack. The left column, in three divisions headed respectively by Gibson, Wood and Davis, the whole under General Porter, gained, by the circuitous route marked out the day before, the British right flank; while Miller's column, passing in small

detachments through the ravine at right angles to the middle of our front, reached the edge of the woods, under cover of which it marched to the head of another ravine, passing down which it took up its position nearly opposite the enemy's centre. Ripley's column was in reserve under Fort Erie; and the artillery was ready to cover the return of our troops.

Before three o'clock of the afternoon of the 17th, Porter assailed the right of the enemy's works; while Miller, charging from the ravine, pierced the enemy's intrenchments. In a few minutes, they had taken possession of the block-houses; captured the second and third batteries; disabled their guns; blown up a magazine; cleared the siege works of defenders; and, after a short struggle, the first battery was also carried. The British reserves were immediately put in motion, at their camp, to march to the rescue; but already our sallying columns had done, mostly with the bayonet, their allotted task, and were safely retiring in good order to the fort.

In this glorious achievement, the losses in killed and wounded were about 500* on either side; but we took 385 prisoners. Among the mortally wounded, we had to mourn the three gallant leaders of Porter's divisions—Davis, Gibson and Wood. "Thus," said Brown, in his official despatch, "one thousand regulars and an equal portion of militia, in one hour of close action, blasted the

*Major-General Sir James Carmichael-Smyth in his Précis of the Wars of Canada, says: "The British had 609 officers and men killed and wounded; the Americans 510."

hopes of the enemy, destroyed the fruits of fifty days' labor, and diminished his effective force one thousand men at least." Jesup, subsequently the Quartermaster-General of our Army, says: "The sortie from Fort Erie was by far the most splendid achievement of the campaign, whether we consider the boldness of the conception, the excellence of the plan, or the ability with which it was executed." And Napier, referring to it in his "Peninsula War," speaks of it as "the only instance in history where a besieging army was entirely broken up and routed by a single sortie."

Drummond broke up his encampment during the night of the 21st, and retired to his intrenchments behind the Chippewa; and so precipitate was his retreat that he abandoned some of his stores in front of Fort Erie, and destroyed others at Frenchman's Creek.

Chippewa, Niagara, Plattsburg, and Fort Erie will ever remain proud names to commemorate the Campaign of 1814, and make us almost forget the sad disasters of 1812 and 1813.

Douglass' exposures, privations, fatigues, and anxieties in this eventful campaign, proved too great for him. After making a survey of our works at Fort Erie, Colonel McRee, towards the end of October, ordered him from the field while prostrated by a bilious fever, from which, thanks to his temperate habits and a vigorous constitution, he gradually recovered, though never permanently.

For his "distinguished and meritorious services in the Defense of Fort Erie, U. C.," Lieutenant

Douglass was brevetted a Captain to date from Sept. 17, 1814. Late in 1814, he was detailed for duty with the army then organizing against Castine, when the proclamation of peace changed his destination to West Point, where he became, January 1, 1815, the Principal Assistant Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy in the Military Academy.

For his new career he was admirably suited, both in his love for science and aptitude for its teaching. At this time the Military Academy, under command of Captain Partridge the senior engineer officer present, was in a rather chaotic condition. Douglass, fresh from Yale College, where order and system existed, determined, with the aid of the other members of the Academic Staff, having like views, to use every effort to effect a radical change. The opportunity soon presented itself, he, as senior engineer in the absence of Captain Partridge, persuaded himself that it was proper to do wrong, in usurping power not belonging to a temporary commander, to accomplish a great good to the Military Academy. Accordingly, so soon as Partridge had left West Point for Washington, Douglass, Oct. 30, 1815, issued a circular requesting "the Professors, the Assistant Professors and Teachers of the Military Academy, as a body, to deliberate on the propriety of arranging a course of study for the Academy, and of casting the cadets into grades, according to their progress in that course; also on the propriety of drawing up a code of regulations for the government of the Academic Staff in their professional duties, and on such other subjects connected with

the interests of the Staff as they might think proper." The Academic Staff met that evening, agreed upon a general outline of a course of study, and recommended a classification of cadets by means of an examination which Douglass, the next day, ordered to be held at once. After a continuance of this examination, for nine days, more than eighty of the cadets were reported as "not qualified agreeably to law to enter upon the Academic course," though its requirements were very small. Douglass' reign as Acting Superintendent was short; but it produced good fruit. Though Partridge, on his return, disapproved of all his subordinate's proceedings, he, in December following, ordered an examination to take place before an invited Board of Visitors, which practically adopted Douglass' views. Accordingly, an order was issued by the Chief Engineer to the Acting Superintendent and Academic Staff to prepare and recommend a course of instruction. The after wrangles between Partridge and the Academic Staff it is not pertinent to exhibit in this place. Suffice it to say, that Brevet Major Sylvanus Thayer superseded Captain Partridge, becoming Superintendent of the Military Academy July 28, 1817, from which day dates the beginning of the glorious career of the Institution.

Upon the death of Andrew Ellicott, August 29, 1820, his son-in-law Douglass succeeded him, as Professor of Mathematics in the Military Academy and vacated his commission of Captain of Engineers, to which grade he had been promoted March 31, 1819. The text books in Mathematics,

which had been used in the Academy, were derived from English sources and constructed on the synthetic plan. Even Algebra was not taught analytically; the Differential and Integral Calculus had not been introduced; and a moderate modicum of Mathematics sufficed, till young, living energy had been infused into the institution by Major Thayer's superintendency and Douglass' promotion. The former, while abroad examining educational establishments, had become enamored of the analytical method of instruction, and the latter fully appreciated its value. Hence, at once, were adopted for the lower classes, the elementary text books which had recently been translated from the French into English by Professor Farrar of Harvard; the higher branches being studied in the original language by the more advanced cadets. This was a great step in the progress of scientific education at West Point, by which the Military Academy greatly profits to this day.

Upon the resignation of Professor Claude Crozet, educated at the celebrated Polytechnic School of Paris, and who had served under the great Napoleon as an artillery officer, Douglass was transferred, May 1, 1823, to the chair of Civil and Military Engineering. This change was much to his taste, for, though fond of mathematical instruction, the bent of his genius led to the science of construction, for which he had full scope in his new professorship. Crozet had done much, particularly in Descriptive Geometry as elementary to Engineering; but as there were no text books on the subject, almost everything had to be taught by lectures. Few public

works then existed in this country, and few publications had reached us giving the results of European construction; hence the new Professor had to supply deficiencies by unremitting labor in compiling information from every available source for his lectures, often of three hours' duration, given at the black-board. By great assiduity he soon reduced this department of instruction to a practical system, adapted to the wants of the service and the necessities of the country. His élèves, of whom he was justly proud, were such eminent engineers and scientists as Mahan, Bache, Bowman, Brown, Bartlett, Childe, Church, Mason, Lee, Swift, and the many who subsequently profited by his instruction on the battle-fields of Mexico.

Douglass, in his sixteen years' service at the Military Academy, had acquired such a scientific reputation that his professional advice was often in requisition. While on leave of absence from the Military Academy, during the summer vacation of 1819, he was the Astronomical Surveyor of the Commissioners for determining the U. S. Boundary from Niagara to Detroit, and, the following summer, he accompanied Governor Cass, in a similar capacity, to the Northwest; during his summer vacations from 1826 to 1830, as Consulting Engineer of the State of Pennsylvania, he was employed upon the Conneaut and Lake Erie Canal, French Creek feeder, Upper Delaware Canal, and the terminus of the Pennsylvania Railroad; directed other state improvements, such as the Sandy and Beaver Canal in Ohio; and declined several distinguished positions, besides the

Chief Engineership of three States. It was during one of these summer vacations that he became connected with the Morris Canal Company of New Jersey, for the purpose of bringing inclined planes into effective operation in lieu of locks for canal navigation; and not being able to get an extended leave of absence, he resigned his Professorship in the Military Academy, May 1, 1823, to accept the Chief Engineership of this important work which he successfully carried out to a practical result.

In 1832, he was appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of the City of New York, then starting into life with large plans and high expectations; but finding his professorship to interfere with his engineering pursuits, he relinquished this position after one year's duty, though he was borne on the rolls, till 1840, as Professor of Civil Engineering and Architecture, during which time he delivered eighty lectures on these subjects. The beautiful building of the University, on Washington Square, New York City, was erected from his designs.

In 1833, he was the Chief Engineer of the Brooklyn and Jamaica Railroad, on Long Island, N.Y.

For nearly sixty years, the subject of supplying the City of New York with pure water had agitated the public mind, and various projects had been proposed to bring it from Manhattan Island creeks, Bronx river, Rye ponds, streams in New Jersey and Connecticut, the upper Hudson, and, finally, in an open canal from Croton river. In 1832, the Asiatic cholera was very severe in New York, while Phila-

delphia, bountifully supplied with Schuylkill river water, suffered little. This fact and the proof that one hundred tons of excrement daily poisoned the wells of New York, gave the crowning impulse to the great question of water supply for the city.

In February, 1833, Water Commissioners were appointed by the Legislature of the State, who employed Mr. Canvass White, an experienced engineer, and Major Douglass "to make separate and distinct examinations of the Croton, Sawmill and Bronx rivers, in the counties of Westchester and Putnam, together with their several tributaries; to provide the Commissioners with a map and profile of the country; and their opinion of the quality of the water, the supply that might be depended on in all seasons, and the practicability of conveying it to the city at an elevation of sufficient height to preclude the use of machinery, and answer all the purposes contemplated." They were also instructed to designate the best and most feasible route for conducting the water, the most fit and proper manner for constructing the conduits and reservoirs, the probable amount of damage that would be sustained by the proprietors of the water to be taken, and of the land it might be necessary to occupy in the construction, together with the total amount of cost to the city for completing and putting in operation the whole project.

Other engagements prevented Mr. White from performing his allotted part; consequently, all the preliminary examinations and extended surveys devolved upon Major Douglass. In ten weeks he

completed them and demonstrated the practicability of the project; and, Nov. 1, 1833, submitted his report, with plans and estimates, to the Water Commissioners, who, on the 12th, forwarded it, with their full approval, to the Common Council. The report recommended the use of the Croton river and its tributaries, the water to be conveyed by an enclosed masonry aqueduct, as cheaper and more durable than iron pipes, of thirty-seven miles long to Manhattanville, and five and a half from thence to the Distributing Reservoir, including an aqueduct bridge across Harlem river, 1,180 feet long, and 126 feet high above the foundations of the piers supporting nine semi-circular arches.

The City of New York was jubilant over the solution of the great problem; the State Legislature, May 18, 1834, authorized the work; the people, at the spring election of 1835, endorsed it; Commissioners were permanently organized; and Douglass was unanimously appointed the Chief Engineer. With an inadequate force, he began, in July, 1835, accordingly, to lay out the boundary of the Croton reservoir and the line of the aqueduct over the rough region near the Hudson; and, early in October, the location of the Croton dam was completed, to which the Commissioners objected and changed it, as also its height, to Garretson's Mill.

During the winter, Douglass was engaged in office-work which brought him more frequently in contact with the Commissioners, who could not, or would not appreciate the scientific character of this great work; who interfered with the discipline over

subordinates; were unwilling to establish an engineer department and define Douglass' prerogatives; and, in fine, treated this vast undertaking as little more than an extended job of plain masonry, which might be carried on at trifling expense.

In the spring of 1836, Douglass, with his small force, was again in the field completing his surveys preparatory to adjusting the claims of proprietors of lands to be used for the works. While thus engaged in the field, the Commissioners were plotting in the city. Suddenly, without making any charges against the Chief Engineer, the Commissioners passed a resolution removing Douglass, Nov. 4, 1836, and appointed as his successor a gentleman with whom it appears they had been in correspondence for some time.

The change of engineers, however, effected no material change in the aqueduct, except of the Croton dam, as a plausible pretext for their arbitrary act, which was built after three years of labor, and, before another was at an end, was swept away by a freshet.

Major Douglass, says the late Rev. Dr. Hale, "had entered upon the survey and plans for this great work with characteristic enthusiasm. He saw it in idea, rivalling the most celebrated of ancient or modern times, the glory of the city and his own. The difficulties in the way of its construction only stimulated his ingenuity, and furnished so many opportunities for displaying the skill which could overcome them. He saw them and saw through them. He was master of the science of construction, and he hoped to erect a work which would not only

last for centuries, but upon which for a century at least the hammer of the repairer should have no occasion to be heard. This conception of a perfect and permanent work he endeavored to communicate to the Commissioners, and fully persuaded that no such work could be accomplished on the common system of contracts, and especially when contracts are given as favors. * * * * But right or wrong, his conceptions were not the conceptions of the Commissioners. His views were not their views. He was for them an impracticable man. * * *

"He felt deeply this disappointment of his hopes; this check in his professional career. He knew that his reputation must be assailed for the vindication of those who had inflicted upon him this injury; but he bore all with great resignation, assured of the respect of those who best knew how to appreciate his merit, and confident too, that time which spares no imperfect work, would vindicate his plans."

Douglass' next public work was the Greenwood Cemetery on Long Island, N. Y., of which he originated the first distinct idea; was active in it from the beginning, becoming the first President of the corporation; and, in 1839–40, laid out the grounds with geometrical skill, showing his perfect knowledge of the relations of lines, surfaces and forms, combined with the highest artistic beauty. His work at Greenwood, so varied in landscape and so refined in taste, has given pleasure to thousands; has taken from death its desolation; and has been the prototype Necropolis of many throughout our country and Canada.

While President of Greenwood Cemetery Association, and practicing his profession of Civil Engineer, he was elected President of Kenyon College, which he accepted, and in 1841, removed to Gambier, Ohio, when he commenced his labors in the institution with great earnestness and industry, in anticipation of a long career of usefulness in a sphere for which he was so well suited by taste and experience. Here he flattered himself that he was to spend the remainder of his days away from the collisions of party strife, the conflicts of pecuniary interest, and the rivalries of low ambition. But his abode in his new arena of activity was of scarce three years' duration, he being suddenly, Feb. 19, 1844, removed from his office, which he had declined to resign, because no charges were preferred against him. A committee of the Board of Trustees, which speaks of Douglass as "a most excellent man, well worthy of universal respect and affection," declared him *unpopular*, but, "in regard to the justice of this difficulty, they do not pretend to speak." To be unpopular with students is so universal, when a President exercises a rigid discipline in the performance of a very responsible duty towards the institution of which he is the head, that few, who have had to deal with unreasoning college-boys, consulting their own more than the interests of their Alma Mater, would attach the slightest importance to such a charge. True or false, however, no proof was alleged, and, certainly, it was a most arbitrary proceeding to be judge, jury and executioner of one against whom they admitted, "nothing at all"

was imputed, which consequently, precluded Douglass from making any defense. Of the real animus for his removal, it is unnecessary to speak in this brief sketch.

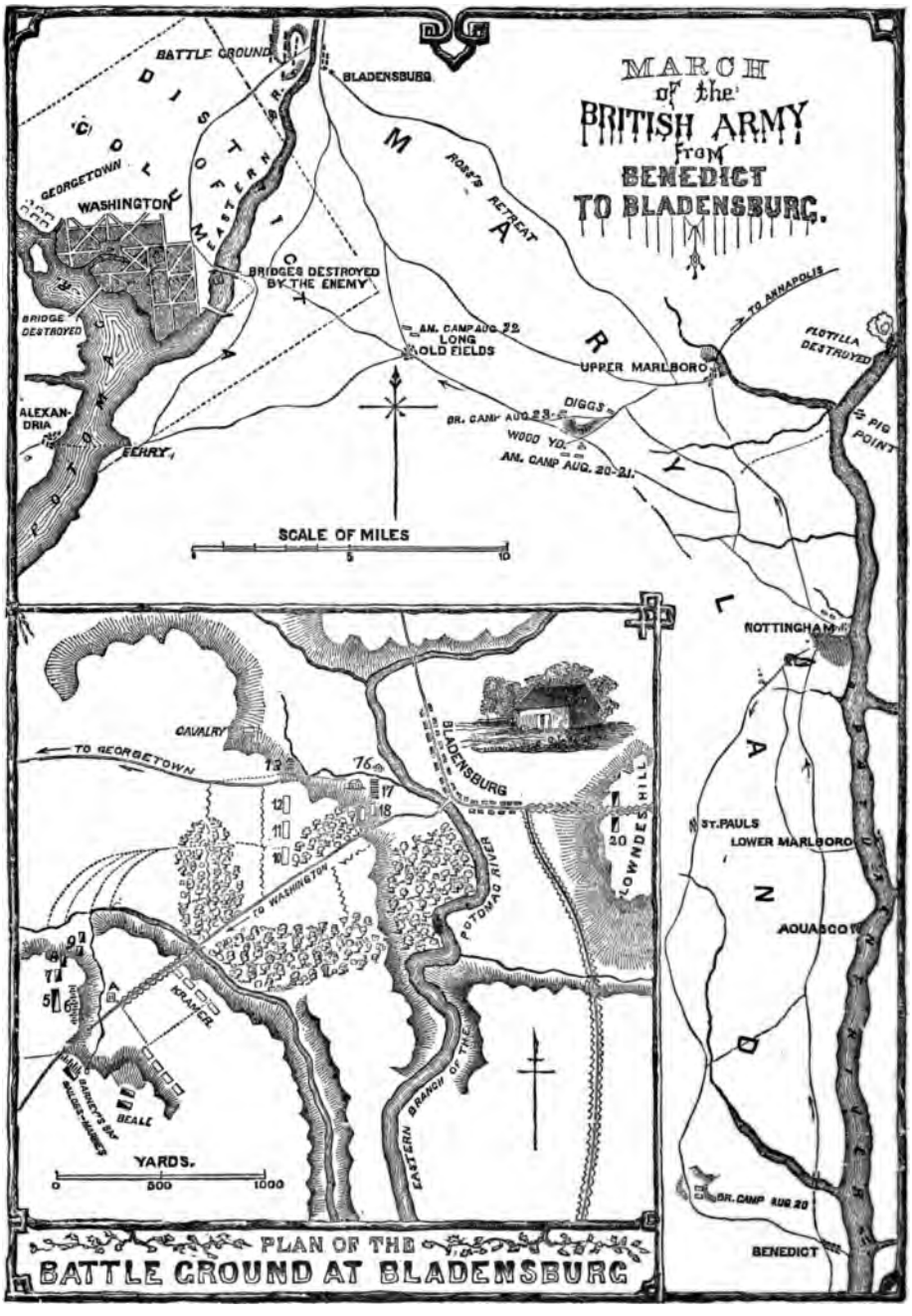
After this untoward event, Douglass surveyed and prepared the grounds for several burial places, for which work he had shown such aptitude at Greenwood. In 1845–6, he laid out a beautiful necropolis near Albany, N. Y.; in 1847, developed the landscape features of Staten Island; and, in 1848, projected the Protestant Cemetery, at Quebec, Canada.

While engaged in this latter work, he was elected Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in Geneva College, N. Y. Though the salary was small, and he had more lucrative offers, the desire, at his age, to have a fixed home for his family, induced him promptly to accept the office upon which he entered, Oct. 16, 1848, with high hopes of sowing, in youthful heads and hearts, the seeds of true wisdom and sound principles garnered up in his own treasure-house by long years of close study, deep reflection and varied experience. Here he continued his congenial duties till towards the close of the college year, when the effects of his Fort Erie exposure, in 1814, and a recent fall at Quebec, produced symptoms of a malady which carried him to his grave, October 21, 1849, in the sixtieth year of his eventful and active life.

We cannot better conclude this sketch of this distinguished teacher, notable scientist, eminent engineer, and sincere Christian, than in the words of the Rev. Dr. Hale, President of the college in which Douglass was a prominent professor:

"His biography, fully written from such materials as are left in his voluminous papers and correspondence and might be gathered from the recollection of his conversations, joined to an exhibition of his labors, would speak to the hearts of the young and generous, and inspire them with an ambition in which there would be neither selfishness nor hardness. He united, in a remarkable degree, the gentleness of the child to the courage of the soldier—the freshest interest in whatever was interesting of those around him to the highest power of scientific abstraction, perfect simplicity to the most polished manners, and high enjoyment of the innocent pleasures of this life to the elevated devotion, the self-denying life and earnest hope of the Christian. What he was he appeared without any politic disguises; what he thought he said, sometimes with an unwary frankness; and what he thought it his duty to do in the position in which the providence of God had placed him, he did with all his might, simply and earnestly. We have in this character the key to his life. With a tithe of his capacity and attainments, many a man has accomplished more for himself, though not for the public—more, that is, if we judge as men usually judge, from fortunes accumulated and high places secured." Of Douglass' stamp of mind, and his ability to instruct, he elsewhere says: "By the cast of his mind and the qualities of his heart, no less than by the extent of his attainments, he was fitted to be a teacher. He had a rare facility in acquiring knowledge and making himself master of it in all its

broadest principles and minutest details; but it seemed the greatest pleasure and the peculiar tendency of his mind to impart it. He loved books, but if I may judge from my acquaintance with him, which was intimate, he was less a reader than a thinker. He looked reverently upon books—books which he desired and sought—and read them, not for amusement, but a serious occupation for his mind and heart. He read, therefore, not superficially, but intently, as he would have listened to the voice of a teacher in answer to earnest and important inquiries. He possessed great powers of analysis, which he exercised, not in a captious or doubting spirit, but that he might better know and form the material whereon to exercise that faculty of his intellect which was more peculiarly his characteristic, the constructive talent. Hence, whatever he knew, he knew thoroughly and systematically. Hence, his views, his opinions, his aims, were all definite. Hence the depth and clearness of his instruction. Hence, in conversation, he was still the teacher, and, without any of the forms of argument, his discourse, clear in its light, was full of information."



NOTE.—In the smaller section of this map, the position of certain troops are indicated as follows : 5, Second regiment of Smith's brigade ; 6, Major Peter's battery ; 7, Major Waring's battalion ; 8, Scott's regulars ; 9, companies of Stull and Davidson ; 10, Ragan's regiment ; 11, Schutz's ; 12, Fifth Baltimore regiment ; 13, Burch's artillery ; 16, Militia and Riflemen ; 17, Baltimore artillery ; and 20, the British.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

CHESAPEAKE CAMPAIGN OF 1813-14;

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF

BRIG.-GENERAL WALKER K. ARMISTEAD.

ENGLAND, in 1813, having no surplus troops to spare from her great European contest, and wishing to divert our forces from an invasion of Canada, determined to use her navy to blockade our coast, lay waste our sea-board, burn our dock-yards, and destroy our shipping. A fit instrument for this marauding warfare she found in Rear Admiral Sir George Cockburn, second in command on the American waters, who, under the British Order in Council of December 26, 1812, declared the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays in a state of rigorous blockade, and, February 4, 1813, entered the Virginia Capes with four 74-gun ships, several smaller armed vessels, and a good supply of surf-boats for landing on the defenseless shores. On board of this fleet was a land force of about 1,800 foreign renegades, called Chasseurs Brittanique, enlisted in Spain from among the prisoners and vagabonds taken or found there, who preferred to engage in the British marine service to risking prolonged confinement in Dartmoor prison.

While some of the smaller vessels under Com-

modore Beresford, visiting the Delaware shore, were utterly foiled in their predatory enterprises, Admiral Cockburn took position in Lynnhaven Bay, from which he sent forth marauding expeditions to burn farm-houses, seize cattle, capture negroes, and carry on every species of uncivilized warfare against a sparse population scattered along the shores and having no means of defense.

Emboldened by the success of a more honorable exploit in the capture of our privateer Dolphin in the Rappahannock, April 3, 1813, he resolved to engage in more ambitious adventures, such as plundering and burning defenseless villages and hamlets about the head of the Chesapeake. For months was the British trident trailed in the mire, and the after companion of the Prince Regent of Great Britain disgraced by the destruction of market-shallops, oyster-boats, and pleasure-barges, the burning of barns, bridges, cottages and stables, and the midnight plundering of unprotected dwellings.

On the first of June, the piratical Admiral having received a considerable naval re-enforcement, and perhaps sated with the contemptible warfare which he had waged against unprotected fire-sides, made the bold resolve of attacking Norfolk and our flotilla, consisting of the frigate Constellation and twenty gun-boats in Hampton Roads, or, more properly speaking, the mouth of Elizabeth River, the feeble defenses of which had been strengthened and new batteries added by Lieut.-Colonel Armistead, the Chief Engineer of the Chesapeake, of whom we will give a brief sketch.

WALTER KEITH ARMISTEAD was born about 1782, in Virginia; descended from excellent stock; was appointed, May 1, 1801, a Cadet of Artillerists and Engineers; joined the Military Academy upon its first organization in 1802; and was graduated from that institution, March 5, 1803, when he was promoted to be a Second Lieutenant, Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army. He served at Norfolk, Va., and West Point, N. Y., till October, 1812, when he became Chief Engineer to Major-General Henry Dearborn, having attained, July 31, 1812, by successive promotions, the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

On the morning of November 21, 1812, the British opened a heavy cannonade and bombardment upon Fort Niagara from five batteries, at and near Fort George, on the opposite bank of the river. From dawn till twilight, one incessant storm of projectiles was poured upon our fort. Though the shells did little damage, the two hundred red-hot shot, which were thrown at us, set fire to the buildings and threatened their destruction; but, says Colonel McFeely, in command of Fort Niagara, in his official despatch, "from the extraordinary vigilance of the officers and men, particularly Major Armistead, of the United States Corps of Engineers, whose indefatigable exertions were extended to all parts of the garrison, the fires were got under without being observed by the enemy." Among the extraordinary instances of bravery on this occasion, was the conduct of the wife of private Doyle, who, during the most furious cannonade, served the six-pounder on the old mess-

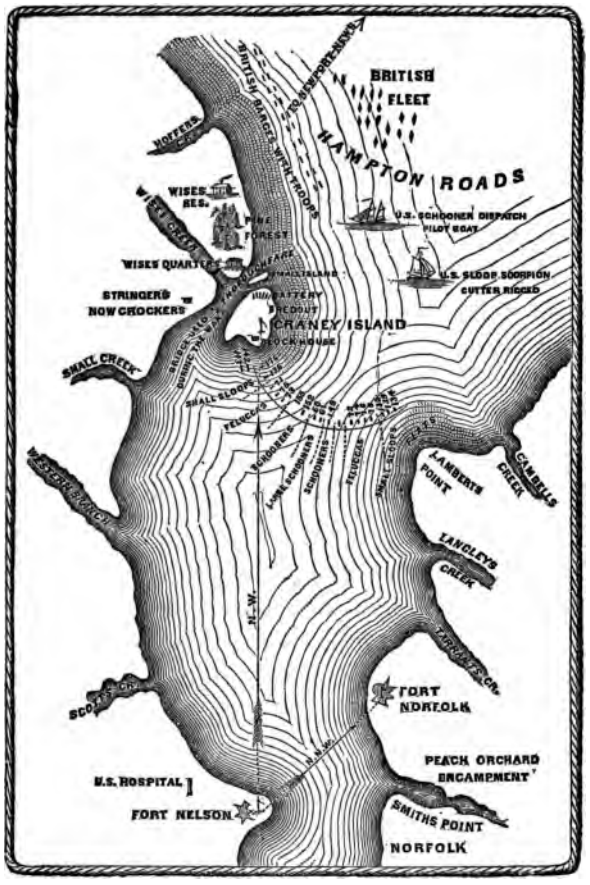
house with red-hot shot, and showed fortitude worthy of the Maid of Orleans.

After the termination of operations on the Niagara frontier, in 1812, Armistead was sent early in the following spring to the Chesapeake. He diligently applied himself at once to protecting Norfolk, the most important town on the Chesapeake shores, and whose excellent harbor he well knew would tempt our great naval enemy.

Norfolk, in 1813, was covered by Fort Norfolk on the right, and Fort Nelson on the left bank of Elizabeth River. These two feeble works and two small redoubts, called Forts Tar and Barbour, protecting the land approaches, being entirely insufficient for a good defense, Armistead threw up some additional intrenchments on Craney Island (containing about thirty acres), at the mouth of the river and commanding its entrance. This Island being the key to the position, it was armed with all the available artillery, four 6, one 18, and two 24-pounders, and had a garrison of 737 militia, regulars and seamen, commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Beatty. The remainder of our forces, mostly militia, occupied the other defenses, the whole of our land forces being under the control of Brig.-General Robert B. Taylor, a very efficient officer.

At daylight of June 22, 1813 (the anniversary of the capture of our unlucky frigate Chesapeake by the Leopard, which in 1807 had so roused the whole nation against the insolence and aggression of England), the British landed about 2,500 infantry and marines, at Hoffleur Creek, and moved towards

Craney Island, opening fire with congreve rockets and light artillery; at the same time executing a flank movement to gain the rear of our forces on the main land. Simultaneously with the advance of



these troops, fifty large British barges, filled with 1,500 sailors and marines, in double column, led by the beautiful Centipede belonging to Admiral Warren, were seen approaching under cover of the shore.

From our battery on the Island, to the north end of which all our artillery had to be moved, was opened a rapid and well-directed fire of grape and canister, which soon drove off the land troops and put the British barges into the greatest confusion, sinking the Centipede and four others, and compelling the remainder to seek the protection of their ships. The enemy lost few lives, but more credit in this feeble and illy-sustained action. Some of the gallant officers from our own flotilla, forming a crescent line from Craney Island to Lambert Point to cover the Constellation and protect the main channel to Norfolk, secured the Centipede, from which had escaped the wounded commander, Captain Hachette, the illegitimate son of George III. Thus, while one brother was disgraced by a handful of militia in an attempt to capture a miserable island in the Chesapeake, which Sancho Panza would have scorned to govern, three other brothers—George IV., William IV. and the King of Hanover—succeeded to thrones.

This ignominious defeat so exasperated Cockburn that the bold buccaneer, three days after, took his unworthy revenge by the commission of atrocities on the defenseless village of Hampton not less brutal and inhuman than those which, six months before, had been perpetrated on the River Raisin by his worthy peer—the butcher Proctor. A combined naval and land force, including the Chasseurs Brittanique, not less than 2,500, landed, and, though our small force of about 450, mostly raw militia, fought well, they were soon overcome by superior numbers, when this little fishing town was immediately given up to

pillage and destruction. A correspondence, respecting the enormities there committed, took place between General Taylor and the British commander of these troops, from which it appears, after making due deductions and allowances, that barbarities were committed almost too revolting to relate. "Women," says Ingersoll, "who could not escape, were hunted down by perpetrators of every indignity on their persons. No help was given to the wounded. The dead were left unburied. The females were not only violated by these wretches, but they encouraged the slaves to violate their own mistresses. The sick were murdered in bed—the maimed and the decrepit from age. Silver plundered from dwellings was perhaps not illegitimate spoil. But the pulpit and the communion table of the Episcopal Church at Hampton (the Church of England, as commonly called in this country), together with all the plate, although the donor's name was engraved on it, together with the parish to which it belonged, were sacrilegious booty. Shirts and shoes stripped from aged persons, indiscriminate rape, one woman ravished by many men—these, and many more such outrages, undoubtedly committed, it would wrong history not to record and civilization not to reprobate." A Select Committee of Congress, composed of very distinguished members, say in their report: "The shrieks of the innocent victims of infernal lust at Hampton were heard by the American prisoners, but were too weak to reach the ears or disturb the repose of British officers, whose duty as men required them to protect every female whom

the fortune of war had thrown into their power. Human language affords no terms strong enough to express the emotions which the examination of the evidence has awakened. In the correspondence between the American and British commanders will be found what is equivalent to an admission of the facts by the latter. No punishment has followed conviction of the guilty. The power of retaliation being vested in the executive, no measure is proposed by this report. Such enormities, instead of inspiring terror, as was probably intended, being calculated to produce the contrary effect, the committee close with a resolution that the President be requested to collect and present to the House evidence of every departure of the enemy, during the war, from the ordinary mode of conducting it among civilized nations."

On the first of July the British fleet of twenty-five vessels left Hampton Roads and entered the Potomac, then only defended by old Fort Warburton (now Washington), just above Mount Vernon. Alexandria, Washington, and Georgetown were greatly alarmed; but, as no vessel then approached nearer than seventy miles to the Capital, the panic soon subsided. Annapolis and Baltimore were then threatened, but, being deemed too strong for a successful attack, the freebooter Cockburn withdrew to plunder and alarm the Carolina and Georgia coasts.

The piratical Admiral having withdrawn from the Chesapeake in 1813, no further danger was apprehended at Washington. Even the abdication of Napoleon at Fontainbleau, April 11, 1814, and his banishment to Elba, leaving England free to

transport her vast veteran forces to America, did not disturb the equanimity of our statesmen at the Capital or rouse them to a realizing sense of the danger to which we were exposed. One Cassandra, under the title of "Americanus," in the "National Intelligencer," did utter a note of warning, but the prophecy was not believed till the enemy was almost within our walls. No preparation was made to oppose the foe. One company of artillery at Fort Warburton, and another of marines at Washington, were the sole trustworthy protection to the Capital scarcely two months before its public edifices were laid in ashes.

Notwithstanding repeated warning of England's extensive preparation to transport many troops to our shores, no official plan of defense was considered by our government till the President and his Cabinet assembled in lugubrious council to deliberate on the situation, July 1, 1814, only a few days after positive information had reached New York, by a cartel, that in the harbor of Bermuda there was anchored "a fleet of transports, with a large force on board, to sail in one or two days to some port in the United States—probably for the Potomac." The next day, the Tenth Military District, embracing Virginia between the Rappahannock and Potomac, the State of Maryland and the District of Columbia, was created and put under command of Brig.-General Winder, who had just been released as a prisoner of war, captured on the northern frontier, where he had won few laurels. On the fourth of July the Secretary of War made requisitions upon

the States for 93,500 militia, in which were included neither cavalry nor riflemen, "to be held in readiness for immediate service," but only the District of Columbia and State of Maryland were called upon to provide their regular quota, in whole or part, "in case of actual or menaced invasion," while Pennsylvania was directed to send 5,000 and Virginia 2,000 to the militia rendezvous. Commodore Barney, a dashing veteran of the Navy was put in command of a small flotilla of gunboats in the Patuxent.

Winder's army on paper was a magnificent array of nearly 100,000 men, the largest force that had ever been destined for the field in America; but, through official apathy or incompetency, defective State laws and dilatoriness everywhere, Winder, two weeks after the enemy had appeared in heavy force in the Chesapeake, was unable to report more than 5,000 troops, mostly raw militia, on his rolls, a large part of which were yet to be collected. In other words, the General was practically powerless, for he had only the semblance of an organized force; in person was compelled to attend to every detail, he being without a staff or engineers; and, unaided by cavalry, had no means of ascertaining the enemy's movements.

While such were our feeble preparations, the British squadron in the Chesapeake was re-enforced, August 16, 1814, by twenty-one vessels under Admiral Cochrane, and was soon after joined by another under Commodore Malcolm. On board were several thousand of Wellington's Peninsular veterans, com-

manded by a brave and enterprising Irishman—Major-General Ross.

After Cockburn's return to the Chesapeake, this rapacious freebooter at once resumed his predatory warfare of burning and robbing villages, farm houses, and everything on which he could lay hands, "cruising about in every direction," says an officer of Ross's army, "threatening the whole line of coast, from the entrance to the very bend of the bay; and thus kept the Americans in a constant state of alarm. Whenever a favorable opportunity presented itself, parties landed, plundered or destroyed the government stores, laid towns and districts under contribution, and brought off all the shipping which could be reached. In a word, the hostilities carried on in the Chesapeake resembled the expedition of the ancient Danes against Great Britain, rather than a modern war between civilized nations." What the atrocious character of that Danish invasion was has been told by Hume and other British historians.

In the midst of his disgraceful career, finding himself opposed by a bold but more humane sailor, Commodore Barney, who with his small craft set at defiance even the brigs and frigates of his Brittanic Majesty, Cockburn resolved to punish such audacity by the capture and destruction of our flotilla. Accordingly, on the 18th of August, the English Admiral ascended the Patuxent as far as Benedict, when he landed a few small guns and a force of 4,500 regulars, marines, and disciplined negroes.

Up to this time little danger was apprehended

at the Capital, the press made light of it, the Cabinet was not alarmed, the War Secretary rebuked all misgivings, Winder's requisitions were still neglected, and the entire public seemed wrapped in somnolent security.

The certain approach of the enemy and the falling back of our flotilla to Nottingham, finally awoke the Secretary of War from his dreams and induced him to sanction Winder's calls for more troops, with the understanding, however, at this moment of absolute danger, that he would so word his requisitions for volunteers as "to guard against interfering with the legal draft." The commanding general, by great personal activity, on the 21st, was at the head of 3,200 men in arms, including a few troops of cavalry and seventeen pieces of small artillery. Had Winder been untrammeled by the President and his Cabinet, with this force, though undisciplined, aided by Barney's flotilla and the natural obstacles besetting the enemy's path, he should have been able to defy the invader, who boldly continued his advance.

Cockburn's raid was well planned. While sending two small squadrons to make demonstrations, one towards Annapolis and Baltimore, and the other up the Potomac, he, with his smaller craft, covered the march of Ross' army up the southern bank of the Patuxent, ostensibly in pursuit of Barney, but, in reality, if the general could be persuaded to co-operate, to make a dash on Washington—the goal of his avarice and ambition.

The entire distance from Cockburn's landing place at Benedict to Washington was less than fifty

miles; but, owing to the extreme heat of the weather, the debilitated state of the troops long cooped-up on ship board, and the difficulty of marching in a country intersected with streams and covered with forests, the British advance was very slow. Not till the evening of the 21st had the enemy reached Nottingham, from which our flotilla had escaped to some ten miles higher up the river above Pig's Point. Resuming the march on the morning of the 22d, the great torch-bearer soon found his love of destruction gratified by our own Secretary of the Navy, who, in the general panic, had given orders to set fire to our flotilla, which was burned before the enemy could reach it.

At this late date, Winder had pushed forward about 800 cavalry and rifles, with a battery of artillery, to reconnoitre and harass the enemy, while the remainder of his force was to follow in support. Finding the enemy greatly superior in numbers, the general ordered the advanced detachment to fall back to the "Wood-yard," and there await him. Our entire force at hand, including infantry, sailors and marines, was about one-half that of the British.

Our Secretary of the Navy having kindly performed the chief service for which the great incendiary had undertaken his raid up the Patuxent, Mephistopheles-like he poured into the ear of Ross—a ready listener where laurels or booty were to be won—the following insidious argument, according to Dr. Thompson, substantially as follows: "Our antagonist, from deficiency of force, or want of confidence in what he has, having hitherto shown no

disposition to obstruct our views, and having at last blown up his flotilla, which, if well fought, might have cost us many lives—may we not conclude, that his defense of Washington will not be more vigorous? And if so, has not the condition on which we are permitted to attack that town arisen? It is true that Washington presents no object strictly military —a navy-yard comparatively empty, and a small and poor population—but we must not forget that inconsiderable in this view as it may be, it is the metropolis of the nation, and that names, as well in war as in peace, do much. By capturing it, we shall give no small *éclat* to our arms abroad; and to ourselves, a more solid gratification, if the government, to save the city, be disposed to make a liberal donation of their money." The latter mercenary suggestion, more than glory or vengance was doubtless the moving impulse which actuated this avaricious corsair.

The prospects of untold prize-money proved too dazzling to be resisted by Ross. Leaving a naval officer and some seamen to ship the plunder, the Irish General and the English Admiral, with about 4,500 combatants and three small pieces of artillery, set out on the morning of the 22d, with three days provisions, direct for Washington, afterwards changing their course to induce Winder to believe that their destination might be either Annapolis or Fort Washington. Winder, in the meantime not thinking it prudent to risk a battle, fell back to "Long Old Fields," an admirable strategic position covering a direct advance on Washington and both its flank

approaches—on the left by the Bladensburg road, and on the right by that to Fort Washington.

The Secretary of State—Colonel Monroe—an old Revolutionary soldier, who had been with Winder for several days, communicated to the President his apprehensions of the great danger to the Capital, and recommended that he "had better remove the records," and "have the materials prepared to destroy the bridges." Fortunately, most of the public archives reached a place of safety, but some were lost or so mutilated that they were never of further use. Upon the receipt of Colonel Monroe's message, Washington was in the wildest panic, and an exodus of thousands of its inhabitants immediately took place.

Events were now rapidly culminating to a crisis, and the worn-out Commanding-General, with only 2,500 men fit for duty—nearly all raw militia—was sorely perplexed as to the proper course to be pursued, though, as usual on such occasions, he was well supplied with the advice of every one from the President, then with him, down to the country squire; in the multitude of counsellors, however, he found no safety.

On the morning of the 23d, Ross was at Upper Marlborough, while Winder was at Old Fields, where, instead of concentrating his scattered forces, only a few miles separated, for battle, or to watch the enemy's movements and threaten his communications, our Commanding-General abandoned this strong and advantageous position so soon as Ross and Cockburn moved forward in the afternoon, thus

making defeat certain by depressing the confidence of our little army, which, at sunset, made a disorderly retreat across the Eastern Branch bridge into Washington. This flight was a death-blow to our cause, both in a military and moral sense. Military: because our small forces were thus scattered over a front of fifteen miles from Bladensburg, where General Stansbury was ordered to take position, to Fort Washington, covered by General Young with a small body. Moral: for on the night of the 23d all was consternation in the Capital, the President and his Cabinet vacillated in their course of action, the troops, worn out with aimless marches and counter-marches, were dispirited, and the Commanding-General, weak everywhere, knew not whither to turn; while the enemy, only ten miles distant, was girding up his loins to spring upon his prey and seize his plunder.

On the morning of the 24th, pending the Council of the President, his Cabinet, and the leader of our forlorn hope, Ross was moving towards his coveted prize, not directly where a broad river interposed, but to turn our left flank where the stream was fordable. When undeceived as to the enemy's intentions, everything was hurried forward to Bladensburg, where tardily were assembled about 5,000 weary, undisciplined and demoralized troops, to meet a like number of veterans trained to war, inured to fatigue, and accustomed to victory. All in our army was confusion, and though Winder was called the commander of this motley mass, there was more than one volunteer generalissimo from the President's mounted Cabinet, one of whom (the Secretary of State), with-

out Winder's knowledge, changed his order of battle, and another (the Secretary of War), who a few hours before had been invested by the President with the entire command, but fortunately his order was suspended before the battle began.

Bladensburg, which has given its name to the disgraceful action fought August 24, 1814, is a small village on the left bank of the Eastern Branch of the Potomac River, connected by a bridge (about 100 feet long) with the right bank, upon which in hot haste our army was drawn up in three nearly straight lines, none of which were flanked or protected by a cross-fire of our 26 pieces, mostly light artillery. About noon, at the turn of the road where it descends the hill beyond Bladensburg, Ross discovered the American forces drawn up on the other side of the river. With his Irish audacity, and estimating our militia as no better than Spanish soldiery, at the head of his élite of about 1,500 Peninsular veterans, after a momentary check, he dashed across the bridge despite our heavy artillery fire, threw out sharp-shooters and rocket-men on his flanks, quickly dispersed our skirmishers, threw our first line into disorder, and captured two pieces of artillery left by our retreating forces before they had hardly made any resistance. Elated by their success, the British light brigade threw aside their knapsacks and haversacks, and, without waiting for support, deployed in thin order to make their front equal to that of our second line, which, being more compact, withstood the onset and in turn drove back the attenuated British line to the river bank. Here they contested

their ground till the second British brigade crossed the bridge, the re-enforced enemy then pressing forward and turning the left of our second line, while a flight of hissing rockets put two of our militia regiments into disorderly flight. The Commanding-General in vain tried to rally them, and, though the right for a short time maintained its ground, the whole of the second line in turn gave way to disgraceful retreat.

The route of our first and second lines having been accomplished, the triumphant British pressed forward to the attack of the American third line, better posted and composed of sterner stuff than either the first or second. The battle here, for more than an hour, raged furiously, the enemy being badly cut up by our well-served artillery, and driven back to the plateau or old duelling-ground, several of their disabled officers falling into our hands; but our success was short lived, for the gallant Barney was severely wounded, our artillery was deserted by its infantry support, Beall's militia was dispersed by the assault of a heavy column, and both our flanks being turned by the British light troops, Winder ordered a general retreat, most of the militia moving towards Montgomery Court House in Maryland.

"With the exception of a party of sailors from the gun-boats, under the command of Commander Barney," says a British officer present, "no troops could behave worse than they did. The skirmishers were driven in as soon as attacked, the first line gave way without offering the slightest resistance, and the left of the main body was broken within half an

hour after it was seriously engaged. Of the sailors, however, it would be injustice not to speak in the terms which their conduct merits. They were employed as gunners, and not only did they serve their guns with a quickness and precision which astonished their assailants, but they stood till some of them were actually bayoneted, with fuses in their hands; nor was it till their leader was wounded and taken, and they saw themselves deserted on all sides by the soldiers, that they quitted the field."

Thus terminated the disgraceful battle of Bladensburg, our laurels lost far exceeding our loss of heroic defenders. The contest began about noon and ended at 4 P. M., the British casualties being upwards of 500 killed and wounded, including several officers of rank and distinction, while our losses were far less, being variously estimated at 10 to 26 of the former and 40 to 51 of the latter.

Ross, with only two of his brigades, having secured an easy victory, ordered his third to join him on the battle-field, where, after a short rest and having nothing to oppose him, he moved towards Washington. Leaving the mass of his forces a mile and a half from the Capitol, and finding no official with whom to negotiate a pecuniary ransom for property at his mercy, he, and his far less scrupulous companion in iniquity—Cockburn—with their guard of torch-bearers and plunderers, rode into the city at eight o'clock in the evening, where, says President Madison in his proclamation of September 1, 1814; "They wantonly destroyed the public edifices, having no relation in their structure to opera-

tions of war, nor used at the time for military annoyance; some of these edifices being also costly monuments of taste and of the arts, and others depositories of the public archives, not only precious to the nation as the memorials of its origin and its early transactions, but interesting to all nations as contributions to the general stock of historical instruction and political science." Of the public buildings only the Post Office was saved; the printing establishment of the "National Intelligencer" and a few private dwellings were destroyed; some houses and stores were plundered, and the Navy Yard and Potomac Bridge, to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands, were burned by ourselves.

The wild Russian Cossacks, who had sacrificed their own sacred Moscow, in 1812, as an act of patriotism, had spared Paris when their hour for vengeance had struck, in 1814; but it remained for civilized Britons, "the paragons of perfect men," as sung by their own Spencer, in the Nineteenth Christian Century, to commit an act of vandalism against the children of their own loins worthy of the barbarous ages of Alaric or Danish Vikings.

The capture of the Capital filled the nation with consternation and mortification, and, on the assembling of Congress, in September, an able committee was appointed to investigate the causes of our great disaster; but, where so many men of shining mark were implicated and occurrences so disgraceful to the government existed, it was difficult to arrive at the exact truth and apportion responsibility. Angry

criminations and re-criminations for long years were made; but, as the actors of that sad drama have passed from the stage, the drop-curtain of oblivion has hidden them from view. The chief indignation of the public was against the Secretary of War, who was charged with persistent perversity and culpable inefficiency. The clamor of what his sarcastic pen called "a village mob," was so strong, that the President would not support him, and Armstrong, forced to leave Washington, resigned his position September 3, 1814, at Baltimore, giving his reasons in an acrimonious communication to the press of that city.

Ross and Cockburn having fulfilled their infamous mission, and fearing that the hand of retribution might cut off their retreat, secretly stole away, after a terrific tempest, in the darkness of the night of August 25th; left their dead unburied and their wounded to our humanity; safely reached Benedict on the 29th, and embarked on ship-board with their booty on the 30th—thus completing their ten days' campaign, a Decameron of most unfragrant history.

According to Cockburn's well devised scheme of conquest, while the modern Erostratus was himself firing the Capitol, Gordon, his lieutenant, with a light squadron of seven vessels, was proceeding up the Potomac on his errand of arson and plunder; reached Fort Washington, August 27th, which was evacuated by its small garrison, through the poltroonery of its commander, on the discharge of the first shell of the enemy; was in hostile array before Alexandria on the 29th, which, being a defenseless

town with not over one hundred male combatants, was compelled to submit to the British Captain's hard and humiliating terms; commenced his retreat, September 3d, fearing, with just cause, that it might be cut off by shore-batteries, fire-ships, and other obstacles; and, on the 9th, by a combination of diligence, skill and good fortune, reached an anchorage of safety for his entire squadron and his twenty-one prize-vessels laden with rich booty.

While Cockburn in person was making his foray on Washington, and Gordon moving up the Potomac, Sir Peter Parker was detailed to carry out the other part of the Admiral's programme of harassing the Chesapeake coasts and threatening Annapolis and Baltimore. The latter as a demonstration, for which it was originally intended, was unnecessary after the fall of Washington, nevertheless, the customary destruction of private as well as public property was continued.

Parker, on the evening of August 29th, desiring as he said, "to have a frolic with the Yankees," for which he had prepared himself by a carousal with his officers, debarked about two hundred men with a view of surprising a militia camp at Moorfields on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. The movement, though made with great caution, did not escape the vigilance of Colonel Read, commanding about two hundred Marylanders, well posted, resolute, and ready to receive Parker's impetuous attack made on the centre of the camp and then extending to both flanks. After a brief but severe contest, the British retreated leaving thirteen dead and three wounded on

the field. Parker himself had the main artery of his thigh cut by a musket-ball and bled to death before he reached his ship, thus tragically terminating his night's amusement.

When Cockburn and Ross had reached the Chesapeake and learned that Gordon's expedition up the Potomac was successful, they at once began to plot new mischief. For some time they had had a longing eye upon the rich city of Baltimore which promised a more valuable booty than Washington, of which they had made such an easy conquest. Accordingly, with a large and well appointed fleet, having on board an army of 6,000 veteran soldiers, Admiral Cochrane, now in command, entered the Patapsco, September 11th. Fortunately the Baltimorians, fully appreciating their danger from a visit from Cockburn, the British buccaneer, had made early preparations to parry the expected attack, The local forces had been organized, intrenchments had been thrown up to protect the city by land, and Forts McHenry and Covington, with some additional works, were well armed and garrisoned to guard the water-approach.

Deeming it easier to attack Baltimore by land, Ross, on the morning of September 12th, debarked at North Point, a force of 9,000 fighting men, of which 2,000 were marines and 2,000 sailors. Immediately upon learning the British movements, General Striker, with 3,200 men, was sent by General Samuel Smith, an old Revolutionary officer in command at Baltimore,.to watch the enemy. He judiciously posted his forces in three lines, their right

resting on a branch at Bear Creek, and their left upon a marsh. Ross, always brave and confident of success, led his troops as at Bladensburg, but, before the battle was engaged, the British General was mortally wounded by one of our sharp-shooters, which devolved the command upon Colonel Brooke, of the 44th regiment, who vigorously pressed forward to the attack. Though our army was greatly inferior in numbers and training to the enemy's, victory was doubtful for two hours, when some of our militia gave way. Finally, at four in the afternoon, Striker, finding that the superior British forces could no longer be held in check, ordered a retreat, which was well executed, to within half a mile of the city intrenchments, the enemy remaining on the battle-field, where Brooke bivouacked for the night.

On the night of Sept. 12th, Cochrane, pioneered by a frigate sounding the channel, moved up the Patapsco with sixteen large ships, five of which were bomb-ketches, coming to anchor two miles from Fort McHenry, out of reach of its guns. This now historic little fort was then much smaller and less powerful than at present. Fortunately it had a brave garrison, commanded by a true soldier, who had done good service on the Niagara frontier—Major George Armistead, of the Third U. S. Artillery, a brother of Brig.-General W. K. Armistead, the Biographical subject of this Chapter.

From sunrise in the morning till two in the afternoon of Sept. 13th, the British bomb-vessels poured a heavy fire upon our works, which the

gallant Armistead was compelled to endure without being able to inflict any injury upon the enemy, who lay beyond the reach of his artillery. At last a shell dismounted one of our 24-pounder guns, killed an officer and wounded several men. Cochrane, seeing the confusion produced by this lucky shot, moved up three of his bomb-vessels into easier range, to the manifest delight of Armistead, who instantly poured forth from every gun a storm of shot and shell, which compelled the venturesome intruders in half an hour to fall back to safer distance, from which the bombardment was resumed more furiously than before, and continued with one or two short interruptions until past midnight. At this time, under cover of the darkness, the Admiral had sent above the fort 1,250 picked men, in barges with scaling-ladders, to capture Fort Covington and the City Battery, and to assault Fort McHenry in the rear. Unfortunately for these daring men their movement was discovered by the light of their own rockets, fired to make visible the shores upon which they were to land. Instantly the alarm was given, and from Fort McHenry and the other works a fierce fire was kept up for two hours, till these invaders were compelled to retreat. The bombardment from the fleet continued till seven o'clock on the morning of the 14th, having lasted for twenty-five hours, during which the enemy threw from 1,500 to 1,800 shells, of which about 400 fell within the works, inflicting on us a loss of but four men killed and twenty-four wounded. It was on this memorable occasion that Francis S. Key, who, while confined on board the enemy's fleet, an un-

willing spectator of the bombardment, wrote that song, "The Star-Spangled Banner," which is destined to live for all time in the heart of every patriot "of the land of the free and the home of the brave."

While the fleet was pouring its iron rain upon Fort McHenry, the British land forces, early in the morning of the 13th broke camp and marched to within sight of the Baltimore intrenchments. Brooke manœuvred all day without success, to discover some weak point or to elude the vigilance of General Smith, when upon ascertaining that the bombardment of the forts was producing little effect, he held a conference in the evening with Admiral Cochrane, both concluding that the capture of Baltimore was a failure. Accordingly the British army stole off to North Point to re-embark, while the discomfited Cochrane weighed anchor at 9 A. M., on the 14th, and stood down the Potapsco.

This Campaign, which began with our creditable success at Craney Island and ended in the brilliant defense of Baltimore, had an intermediate history most humiliating to the nation, for which the civil, far more than the military authorities were responsible. Upon these short-comings we will offer some criticisms.

The first and most important omission of the government was the total neglect of any timely defense of its Capital. War was inevitable for many years prior to its declaration, June 18, 1812, during which period many of the capitals of Europe had fallen before the conqueror. In December, 1812, a British squadron was known to be at Ber-

muda destined for some southern port; February 4, 1813, a fleet entered the Chesapeake; and June 22, 1813, the attempt to take Norfolk occurred. After a marauding excursion to the Carolinas, Cockburn returned, March 1, 1814, to resume the plundering of the Chesapeake shores; in the meantime, January 20, 1814, some 4,000 Peninsular veterans having reached Bermuda. These shadows of coming events were soon followed by the abdication of Napoleon, April 11, 1814, and the availability of Wellington's whole veteran army for the invasion of the United States. It was announced, June 28, 1814, that a large fleet had left Bermuda with troops on board, which arrived in the Chesapeake, July 14, 1814. Yet, with all these ample warnings, and knowing that the enemy had visited almost every river falling into the Chesapeake, nothing was done to increase our navy in these waters or make additions to our land defenses. Not a battery was built, not a gun was mounted, nor a regiment mustered into service for the defense of Washington, of whose coming danger we had had more than twelve months notice, and of its impending peril not less than six. Only six weeks before the Capital's destruction, was the administration roused from its long-continued torpor. The Cabinet, July 1, 1814, when finally roused from its sleep of security, met in desponding consultation how to save Washington, and adopted a programme of defense, magnificent on paper, though practically almost worthless. An army of nearly 100,000 militia was decreed to be held in readiness, of which 15,000 were to be forthwith

mustered into service. But of this grand array few turned out, most of the quotas continuing home-soldiers. Owing to a defect in the state law, the 5,000 required at once from Pennsylvania could not be drafted; through lack of timely notice the Virginia quota of 2,000 was summoned too late to be mustered in; and of the 6,000 Marylanders required, but 2,000 ever appeared, and these arrived, jaded and disorganized, only in time to be defeated at Bladensburg. Hence, Winder's army numbered not much over 5,000, mostly raw militia which had never drawn a trigger against an enemy. At this time only 330 regulars were left in the extended limits of the Tenth Military District, 500 having been marched from Washington to the Northern frontier only two weeks before, notwithstanding the alarm of an impending attack on the Capital, which the Secretary of War even then rebuked as an idle dream.

This small force, which had been assembled by driblets, was provided with neither staff nor engineers, and had hardly a handful of cavalry. Instead of being placed in camps of instruction, where our forces could watch the threatened points—Baltimore, Annapolis, Alexandria and Washington (all within ten days' reach of the enemy), when they finally came together they were without the organization, drill and discipline essential to an army, or, to use the words of General Winder, "not two men of the whole knew any thing of military science."

From the Secretary of War's dilatoriness or hostility to General Winder, who had been selected to

command the Tenth District instead of General Moses Porter, who was Armstrong's choice, Washington was defenseless, as the enemy well knew, up to the very day of the actual invasion of our soil. Winder, so early as July 9th, a few days after his appointment to command, in an able communication pointed out our deficiencies and made some excellent suggestions; but the Secretary of War vouchsafed no reply, contenting himself with objecting to calling out more troops, because he considered militia only available on sudden emergencies, and the expense of their being encamped till called into action, would be a useless charge upon our empty treasury.

This deplorable condition of things does not, however, hold the Commanding-General blameless, for he had some force, the elements were all in his favor, and the path of the invader was beset with multiplied difficulties. Ross' army was destitute of cavalry; had but two small pieces of artillery dragged by hand; was enervated by long confinement on ship-board; had to march, with hesitation and apprehension, forty miles in sultry August, men continually falling by the way side overcome by heat; and the country was covered with forests and intersected by streams, defiles and marshes, where a single hour's stout resistance would have checked further advance. Yet, with all these advantages and a local knowledge of the banks of the Patuxent, not a bridge was burned, no road obstructed even by the felling of a tree, no sharp-shooters hung upon the flanks and rear of the coming foe, and not for one moment was the passage of a stream or ravine

disputed. How different was the course of Schuyler when Burgoyne, invading our territory, came down the valley of the upper Hudson in 1777 !

The next egregious blunder was the order of the Secretary of the Navy to destroy Barney's flotilla, thus accomplishing for the enemy the principle purpose for which he undertook his difficult and dangerous expedition. The bold Commodore, before and after, showed what he might have done with his small craft and courageous sailors to harass the enemy. By this act of inexplicable terror which seemed to paralyze the government, all naval means of threatening the enemy's communications with his ships were removed, the army rendered more hopeless, and Cockburn invited to prosecute his raid and achieve his daring design of plundering and burning Washington.

After the enemy had reached Upper Marlborough, it should have been evident to Winder that Cockburn and Ross, with the great prize of Washington before them, were threatening other points only as demonstrations to deceive him, hence our Commanding-General should have concentrated every thing at Long Old Fields, an admirable and strong position covering our whole base of operations from Alexandria to Bladensburg. Had he fought his battle here where he had seventeen pieces of artillery and 3,200 combatants, which could have been increased in a day to 5,000, his chances of success would have been better than at Bladensburg; and in the event of defeat his retreat on Washington was quite as easy, with the advantage of a broad river

interposed between him and his pursuers. This fatal 22d of August, of American inaction, of Winder's failure to throw the slightest obstacle in the enemy's path, of almost panic in the presence of the foe, and dastardly retreat almost without firing a shot, was the knell of our safety and signal to embolden the British corsair to carry out his fiendish purposes. It was the anniversary of Bosworth field, so calamitous, more than three centuries before, to the House of York, and a safe deliverance from danger to that of Lancaster.

Winder, having abandoned his advantageous position at Long Old Fields about five on the evening of the 23d, retreated, or rather ran, direct to Washington, leaving General Stansbury to occupy Bladensburg, thus giving Ross the advantage, had he been more alert, of falling first upon one corps and then upon the other, thus easily destroying both.

Our so-called army, except Barney's seamen and Peter's regulars, was a heterogeneous mass without order or discipline, and had scarcely one officer with the least knowledge of actual warfare. The various bodies at, and arriving in hot haste near Bladensburg, on the morning of August 24th, numbered about 5,100 combatants, exclusive of Colonel Minor's force of 600 who were detained at the armory watching the counting of flints by the cautious issuing officer. Most of them had been under arms nearly all night, were worn down with constant marching and countermarching under an almost tropical sun, and thus, weary and dispirited, were hurried into action in

three lines of battle too far apart for mutual support. In their front the bridge across the stream was not destroyed, nor the village of Bladensburg, partly built of brick, converted into a defensible *tête-de-pont;* everything on the contrary being done to invite the easy approach of the enemy. To add to our misfortunes, instead of one, we had at least three Commanding-Generals—Winder, Monroe, and Armstrong —each giving orders without any concert of action. "Everything seemed done to organize defeat, every preparation made to yield, no spirit shown or arrangements to conquer."

The battle being lost and the retreat ordered, no rallying point was designated, hence, most of the troops were practically disbanded. When the British threw 600 brave infantry under Colonel Musgrave into Chew's house at Germantown, they successfully resisted a large part of Washington's army, and turned the tide of battle. How different might have been the fate of the Capital, had some of Winder's forces been thrown into the strong, well built public building, which Ross had no artillery to breach!

Our troops being dispersed and utterly demoralized, no attempt was made to impede the enemy's retreat to his ships, though a few active partisan corps might have inflicted severe punishment on the British, or at least have compelled them to abandon their booty.

Many minor criticisms could be made, all of which would be to the same purport, showing that government apathy, divided councils, want of preparation, reliance upon raw levies, and ignoring military expe-

rience and education, do not conduce to the successful conduct of war nor to the honor of a nation's arms.

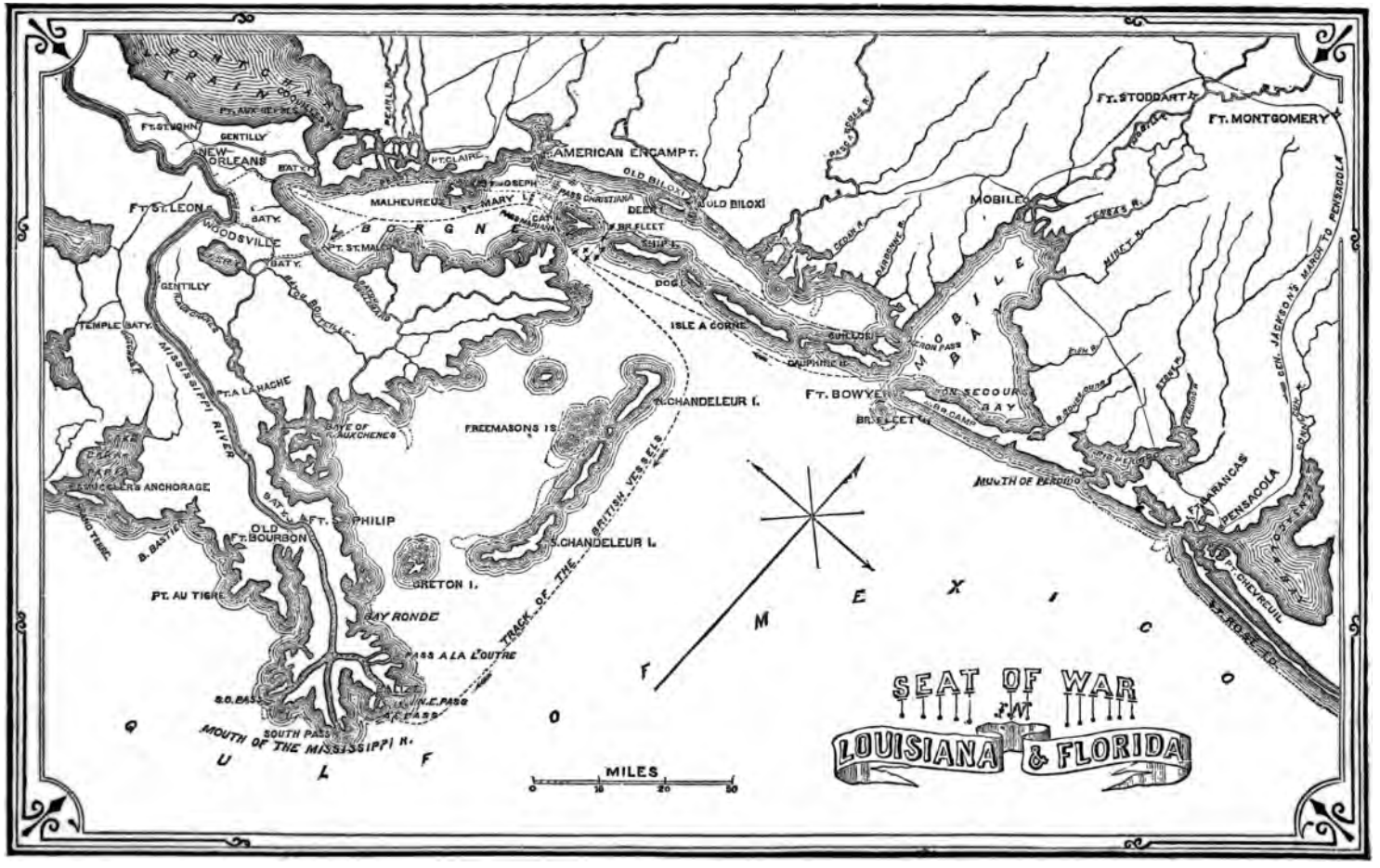
We will conclude this sad chapter of our history, with a brief notice of Brig.-General Armistead, who, after the successful defense of Craney Island, continued to superintend the fortifications of the Chesapeake and its tributary waters till November 12, 1818, when he became Colonel and Chief Engineer, U. S. Army, with headquarters at Washington city.

On the re-organization of the Army, he was transferred, June 1, 1821, to the head of the Third Regiment of Artillery; and, "for faithful services ten years in one grade," was brevetted, November 12, 1828, a Brigadier-General. In 1836, he was ordered to Florida, where he remained five years engaged against the Seminole Indians, part of that time, (May 6, 1840 to May 31, 1841) being in command of the Florida army, making his headquarters at St. Augustine. He ordered expeditions in various directions to penetrate the everglades; but the extreme heat, the unknown haunts of the savages, and sickness among the troops frustrated the operations of the Commanding-General, who, in other respects, conducted the campaign with zeal and energy.

Upon his return from Florida, he was placed, October 15, 1841, on a Board to select a site for a Western Armory, upon which he continued till February 9, 1843, subsequently making the headquarters of his regiment at Fort Moultrie, S. C.; but his long service, particularly in the swamps of Florida, had so undermined his health that he died, October 13, 1845,

at his home in Upperville, Va., at the age of sixty-three.

General Armistead was not a brilliant man; but a brave, earnest and faithful soldier. He possessed a very kindly nature; was noted for his generous hospitality; and always conscientiously discharged every duty entrusted to his performance.


SEAT OF WAR
LOUISIANA & FLORIDA
NEW ORLEANS
AMERICAN ENCAMPT.
MOBILE
MOBILE BAY
Ft. MONTGOMERY
Ft. STODDART
Ft. St. LEON
Ft. St. JOHN
GENTILLY
MALHEUREUX
Ft. St. MARY
BORGNE
OLD BILOXI
BILOXI
Ft. BOWYER
ISLE A CORNE
DAUPHINE I.
DOG I.
CAT I.
Br. FLEET
TEMPLE BATY.
WOODSVILLE
Ft. A LA HACHE
BAYOU BOURTHAC
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
BAY OF ST. LOUIS
FREEMASONS IS.
S. CHANDELEUR I.
N. CHANDELEUR I.
BRITISH VESSELS
TRACK OF THE
SMUGGLER'S ANCHORAGE
OLD Ft. BOURBON
Ft. PHILIP
Ft. AU TIGRE
BAY RONDE
PASS A LA L'OUTRE
S.E. PASS
S.W. PASS
SOUTH PASS
MOUTH OF THE MISSISSIPPI R.
GULF OF MEXICO
MOUTH OF PERDIDO
PENSACOLA
Ft. BARRANCAS
Ft. PICKENS
Ft. ST. ROSE
SANTA ROSA I.
GEN. JACKSON'S MARCH TO PENSACOLA
MILES
0 10 20 30

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

LOUISIANA CAMPAIGN OF 1814–15;

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF

MAJOR A. LACARRIERE LATOUR.

FROM SUMMER CAMPAIGNS in the Frigid North, we now turn to the brief, brilliant, decisive and memorable Winter Campaign of 1814–15 in the Sunny South, which added another illuminated page to our country's history, and terminated in a blaze of glory, a war begun in gloom, disaster and national dishonor.

In obedience to Britain's barbarous orders "to destroy and lay waste such towns and districts upon the coast as may be accessible to naval attack," the Carolina and Chesapeake shores had been wantonly ravaged; the public, and some private buildings of the nation's Capital were burned; and Baltimore saved from like destruction, by the brave defense of Fort McHenry, under "the Star Spangled Banner which so triumphantly waved" till the crest-fallen foe had ignominiously fled from the Patapsco.

New Orleans was to be the next doomed city, for the capture of which an army of fourteen thousand veterans, fresh from Peninsular victories, supported by a fleet of fifty ships, including transports, was destined; while an Indian war was to be fomented

on our southern border. No wonder that the great Emporium of the West, independently of its rich "booty" tempting British cupidity, should have been selected as the objective point of the campaign, for, everywhere, the Gulf coasts were approachable; numerous bayous, rivers and lakes freely admitted water-craft close to the city; forts and batteries nowhere defended its outposts; neighboring Spanish settlements freely harbored British ships; Louisiana's mixed population was scarcely Americanized; we had but a single sloop of war and six gun-boats to oppose to the enemy's powerful fleet; a handful of newly recruited regulars was our only force to meet England's army of picked troops; and for both belligerents the stake, to be won or lost, was immense, for it was the precious key to the mighty Mississippi cutting in twain our entire territory, and almost connecting the Gulf of Mexico with the enemy's vast Canadian possessions.

So confident was the British government of cómplete success, that a full set of officers was embarked on board the squadron, for the administration of civil affairs in Louisiana, which was expected promptly, and without difficulty or danger, to fall into their hands. But England little knew the character, energy, and genius of the man, who, out of discordant and heterogeneous materials, as if by magic, could create and organize a small but efficient army, imbued with his own spirit and love of country, which was destined, in a campaign of a few weeks, to humble the arrogant pride of haughty Albion.

Andrew Jackson, "the saviour of Louisiana," was commissioned a Major-General, May 1, 1814, in the United States Army, while resting at the "Hermitage," after his arduous campaign against the Creek Indians. From this charming home, near Nashville, he was called to the command of the Seventh Military District, with headquarters at Mobile. His Argus vigilance soon unmasked British intrigue among the Southern savages; thwarted their seductive offers to win over Lafitte's Baratarian smugglers; counteracted their plots to excite hostility among Louisiana's mixed population; and discovered Spanish violation of neutrality at Pensacola, in whose harbor the British ships lay at anchor, from whence supplies were distributed, and in whose forts ammunition was stored. While promptly arranging to crush this alliance of Britons, Spaniards and Indians, he was no less active in securing volunteers in Kentucky and Tennessee to give proofs of his determination. The American Hercules resolved to destroy, by one vigorous blow, this triple-headed Cerberus guarding the outer sea portal to Louisiana.

Meanwhile from their Pensacola base, the British and their Indian allies were preparing to seize an inner gate to New Orleans—Fort Bowyer—a feeble work on a headland of Mobile Bay. Jackson threw into it 130 regular infantry, under the brave Major Lawrence, who, with twenty small pieces of artillery behind low, thin parapets, gained September 15, 1814, over four ships and a land force, having 92 guns and 1,330 men, a glorious victory, re-

sulting in the destruction of the enemy's flag-ship and killing and wounding 232 of their whole force, while our loss was but eight. This repulse was fatal to British prestige, and weakened their hold upon the savages, who fled to their forest fastnesses to escape the wrath of one they had much reason to dread. It also gave a great impulse to recruiting volunteers and harmonizing all discordant elements in New Orleans.

The defeated enemy were received as friends and allies at Pensacola, the subservient Spanish suffering the British to garrison their forts. Jackson, without waiting for orders, determined to carry out his meditated plans upon his own responsibility, "peaceably if he could, forcibly if he must," and thus promptly end this gross violation of the law of nations in giving aid and comfort to the enemy. Accordingly, so soon as he could assemble a sufficient force, he marched to West Florida; seized Pensacola, November 7, 1814; compelled the British fleet to put to sea; dispersed the remaining savages; and caused the fortifications, upon which they had relied for protection, to be destroyed.

By this vigorous execution of his bold conception, Jackson had secured his left flank, produced a great moral effect upon the Indians, and prevented future Spanish co-operation with the enemy. He now marched westward; and, after providing for the defense of Mobile, arrived, December 2, 1814, at New Orleans.

Though worn down by fatigue, anxiety and sickness, his coming had an electrical effect on the citi-

zens, and the cry of "Jackson's come" passed from mouth to mouth, filling all with hope and banishing despondency. Divided councils, chaotic confusion, lack of troops and arms, open passes unguarded, and the near approach of the enemy had seemed to foredoom the city to certain destruction, and presaged that Louisiana could only be saved from capture by a Providential miracle.

Jackson lost not a moment, nor spared any exertions to establish order, maintain discipline and inspire confidence. He devoted himself to the study of the topography of the country; closely examined every approach to the city; and bent all his energies to check the advance of the enemy. He ordered forts to be repaired, batteries to be built, and bayous to be obstructed by his Chief Engineer.

Major Arsene Lacarriere Latour, then a Civil Engineer of Louisiana, filled this important position. Of this excellent officer, whose modesty equalled his intelligence, we regret, after the most diligent search, that we have only the scantiest materials for a biographical sketch. That so little should be known of him, even at New Orleans, is most strange, for he must have been a man of prominence to have been selected by General Jackson for the responsible duties that devolved upon him at such a crisis. Besides, we have evidence that he was an author of note, for in his "Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814–15," we have the best account of that great Southern campaign, which has been the basis of all that has since been written upon the subject, and the careful perusal,

which we have given to the work, satisfies us of the accuracy and conscientious fidelity of the narration.

Major Latour was born during the French Revolution in Auvergne, France, the fertile land of great soldiers like Turenne, Delille and Desaix; and, doubtless, was a descendant from the same family with Latour d' Auvergne, the "First Grenadier of France," who "Died on the Field of Honor," June 27, 1800, at Oberhausen. He received an excellent military education; in 1793, left his native land to seek an asylum in St. Domingo, from which he was driven by the insurrection of the blacks; and finally, in 1802, took up his residence in Louisiana, then French territory. The engineer graduates of our own Military Academy being mostly engaged on the Northern frontier and in superintending the coast defenses, General Jackson was compelled to seek elsewhere for a competent Chief Engineer, and was fortunate in finding Major Latour who had been fitted in a French government engineer school for the profession, and besides was familiar with the whole theatre of war in Louisiana, particularly about New Orleans, of which he had made surveys.

Latour, under General Jackson's orders, repaired Fort St. Philip, destroyed the wooden barracks within the work, and mounted additional artillery upon the ramparts and covered-way. More effectually to defend the passage by the Mississippi, he erected two batteries for 24-pounders on the right bank of the river: one on the site of old Fort Bourbon, and the other half a mile above. Other batteries were thrown up to guard the most important passes to

New Orleans, particularly at the confluence of the bayou Sauvage and Chef-Menteur; while all others, from Attakapas to Manchac, leading from the ocean into the interior of the country, were obstructed to the extent that time and means permitted. For executing these important works and subsequently for throwing up the intrenched lines on both banks of the Mississippi, soldiers were drafted by detachments from each of the several corps, and kept hard at work, sometimes past midnight, without their showing the least impatience or expressing a murmur of discontent. Like true patriots they were actuated by the noblest feelings, appreciated that a rich city and a great territory were under their protection, and exulted in the thought of defending their fellow citizens and avenging their country's wrongs. Large gangs of plantation negroes also assisted in the good work.

The expected enemy, fast approaching on his errand of destruction, supposed that we were still ignorant of his movements; but Commodore Patterson, commanding the New Orleans naval station, had received a letter from Pensacola, dated Dec. 5th, informing him of the arrival of a large British fleet, with an army on board, which was destined to act against New Orleans. A few days later, this fleet anchored between Cat and Ship Island, and in small boats rapidly expedited troops through the shallow waters of Lake Borgne, hoping to surprise Jackson and capture the city before their presence was even suspected. How little the enemy knew of the sleepless energy and indomitable will of their great antago-

nist the sequel soon proved. Already our gunboats, under Lieutenant Jones of the Navy, had taken position, near Malheureux Island in Lake Borgne, to dispute the further passage of the British barges, which, Dec. 14th, vigorously attacked them. Our five gunboats, fast planted in the mud, with 182 men on board, were attacked by forty-two barges and launches having a complement of 1,200 men. Notwithstanding this enormous disparity of force, the Americans defended themselves for an hour and a half, and did not strike their flag until they had destroyed more than one-third of the enemy's force, one of their launches which we sunk carrying as many men as manned our whole mosquito fleet.

The British, having now complete control of Lake Borgne, quickly rendezvoused their troops on Pea Island, off the mouth of Pearl River, where some thirty or forty Spanish fishermen aided their disembarkation, and, being quite as ready to sell their country as their fish, acted as spies to give the enemy information and as guides to lead them through the difficult inlets. Jackson had already proclaimed martial law; and had occupied with men, batteries and redoubts nearly every assailable point of which the enemy could make choice. Though the danger was now so imminent, the intensest enthusiasm prevailed, military airs resounded in the streets, everywhere the din of preparation was heard, troops and citizens were eager for the fray, and the omnipresent leader directed every department of this now vast camp.

By some strange oversight, no special attention

had been paid to obstructing the Bayou Bienvenue, emptying into the head of Lake Borgne, distant, in a direct line, only six miles from the Mississippi, or about double that distance following the sinuosities of the water along Bienvenue, Mazant, and the Villerie Canal. On the 20th of December, a disguised British officer, guided by three of the Spanish scoundrels from the fishermen's village, explored this route, which, on his report, it was decided to adopt, not only because it was short and practicable, but led to within nine miles of the city.

On the morning of December 23d, about 2,400 British, after capturing the few pickets guarding this communication, reached the Mississippi before noon without observation or opposition. This was a brilliant achievement, and had the British General's subsequent operations been conducted with like spirit and judgment, Louisiana might have fallen, notwithstanding the most strenuous efforts of her sturdy defenders—then less than 5,000 men, mostly militia. From this point which the enemy had so successfully reached, neither troops nor obstacles prevented the British advance, in a few hours' march, over a level road along the levee; but the enemy left ungathered the fruits of his own enterprise. Several of the most sagacious officers of this British force appreciated the advantage of a *coup-de-main*, but more cautious counsels prevailed and the golden opportunity was lost, never to return.

Jackson received certain intelligence, through Major Latour who had reconnoitered the enemy, of this threatening movement, in less than two hours

after its accomplishment. His troops were then scattered to guard the various approaches to the city, and he dared not concentrate them all on the enemy, who might be only attempting by a feint, to open other avenues to his direct march, particularly by the Gentilly road, where the general had reasonably expected the enemy would approach. Happily for himself and for his country, Jackson, with his characteristic vigor and valor, resolved instantly to assail the enemy. "The British are below," said he, "we must fight them to-night." After protecting the Gentilly road, all the force he could prudently withdraw from exposed points was about 1,800 men, of which less than half were new regulars, and the remainder raw militia who had never battled with a civilized foe. This small, inexperienced force was now to measure swords, at the Quatre-Bras of another Waterloo, with greater numbers of the enemy, soon after swelled to 4,500 veteran troops which had won their distinction on the bloody fields of Spain and Portugal.

Among the many versions of this vital action, we much prefer the brief and spirited account given by General Jackson in his own official despatch, of Dec. 27, 1814, to the War Department, in which he says: "General Coffee was ordered to turn the enemy's right, while with the residue of the force I attacked his strongest position on the left, near the river. Commodore Patterson having dropped down the river in the schooner Carolina, was directed to open a fire upon their camp, which he executed at about half after seven. This being the signal

of attack, General Coffee's men, with their usual impetuosity, rushed on the enemy's right, and entered their camp, while our right advanced with equal ardor. There can be but little doubt that we should have succeeded on that occasion, with our inferior force, in destroying or capturing the enemy, had not a thick fog, which arose about eight o'clock, occasioned some confusion among the different corps. Fearing the consequences under this circumstance, of the further prosecution of a night attack with troops then acting together for the first time, I contented myself with lying on the field that night." In concluding this despatch, after complimenting the meritorious commanders of troops, he says of his Chief Engineer: "Major Latour, having no command, volunteered his services, and was of great assistance to me." Our killed, wounded and prisoners in this engagement were 213; while the enemy lost about double that number. The British commander, General Keane, in his official report, says: "A more extraordinary conflict has perhaps never occurred; absolutely hand to hand, both officers and men."

New Orleans being now open to attack, at any moment, by forces superior both in numbers and discipline, Jackson, though he had produced a great moral effect upon the enemy, sensibly felt the necessity of immediately intrenching his forces, and not putting everything to hazard by a field-fight with a veteran army. Accordingly, at dawn of the 24th, he took up a position, two miles above, behind Rodriguez Canal, where the river and swamp were but

a short distance apart, while some cavalry and regular infantry observed the enemy's movements. Major Latour cut the Mississippi levees to flood the ground between the belligerents and prevent the enemy's advance; but the expedient was of little value, as the swell in the river soon subsided, leaving the left bank dry.

While our army, day and night, was piling up earth and bales of cotton to form the intrenchment, extending from the river deep into the morass, Latour was called to strengthen the position at the confluence of Bayou Sauvage and Chef Menteur, an unfounded rumor having been spread that the enemy was moving on our rear by the Gentilly road. Fortunately, during four precious days, the demoralized British moved neither to the front nor rear. They did little else than rejoice, on Christmas, over the arrival of General Packingham, the "Hero of Salamanca," and bring from the fleet some heavy artillery, placed in battery on the 27th, with which they set fire to, and blew up our schooner Caroline. While these things were transpiring on the left bank of the Mississippi, Colonel Morgan was ordered to abandon his position at the "English Turn," leave his artillery and a small garrison at Fort St. Leon, and, with the remaining forces, occupy a position on the right bank of the river, opposite Camp Jackson.

Packingham, the new commander-in-chief, with an army of 8,000 excellent troops, was determined to drive Jackson before him and carry his intrenchments by storm. On the evening of the 27th, the

enemy advanced, drove in our pickets and out-posts, reconnoitred our position, halted before dark within a few hundred yards of our line, and passed the night in building batteries for the morrow under a continued dropping fire of our light troops. Jackson, during this long winter night, was not idle. Clearing his front of all obstacles to give full play to his twenty guns, his 4,000 infantry, and to the flanking fire of the schooner Louisiana in the river, he was ready, at daybreak of the 28th, to give a warm welcome to the enemy advancing in two columns. That on the right, under General Gibbs, moved along the woody margin of the cypress swamp; while that on the left, under General Keene, followed the public road near the river's bank—each preceeded by skirmishers in open order, forming nearly a continuous line from the river quite into the morass with a view of turning our left. Onward this imposing array, discharging showers of rockets, proceeded to within close view of our intrenched line, from which poured forth a death-dealing fire of artillery and musketry, crossed by more than 800 shots from the Louisiana. From this terrible storm, Packingham recoiled, withdrew his assailants to wherever they could find shelter, and, after a vain effort to turn our left, resolved, on the advice of a council of war, to adopt a more cautious policy. Accordingly, he brought forward heavy siege-guns from the ships before attempting another serious attack upon Jackson, who was not to be seduced into fighting with his raw militia in the open field; nor to be terrified into submission by showers of shells and rockets

which did no damage to his works and little to their defenders, sixteen killed and wounded being our total loss in the late assault.

Packingham was in great perplexity; to advance on a narrow front, barred by a strong intrenched line, was to lead his troops to almost certain slaughter, and for his renowned veterans to retire, before raw militia, was degrading. As the only alternative, he determined to treat our slight field-works like strong Spanish fortifications. Accordingly, by the night of the 31st, heavy guns were established in three batteries at 600 yards from the American line, ammunition accumulated, and, throughout the night, Sir John Burgoyne, the British Chief Engineer, was busy with spade and shovel. Meantime our line had been strengthened and new artillery added; while, on the right bank of the Mississippi, Major Latour, to provide against contingencies, had thrown up a strong bastioned intrenchment behind Boisgervais' Canal, and formed from a brick-kiln a heavy redoubt, opposite New Orleans.

The hours of the closing year "gave dreadful note of preparation"; but Jackson, "thawing cold fear," determined to make New Year a like unhappy holiday as Christmas had been to the British army. The misty dawn of January 1, 1815, concealed the workmen completing the enemy's batteries, and the formation, several lines deep, of his troops for assaulting the breaches so soon as made. About 8 A. M., the fog lifted, when the cannonade, with every advantage to the enemy, became active and general, continuing for two hours with great vigor

and precision. The conflict was now terrible, but the ascendency of our return fire was evident, dismounting the enemy's artillery, killing and disabling their gunners, and almost demolishing their batteries, which were nearly silenced at mid-day. General Coffee had, at the same time, frustrated the enemy's effort to turn our left. Before 3 P. M. the British army, confident in the morning of entering New Orleans before night, fled in hot haste to the ditches, sought shelter wherever it was to be found, and, under cover of the coming darkness, crawled back to their camp, leaving five pieces of artillery a spoil for the Americans.

Wellington's heroes, who had trod the path of victory from Lisbon to Toulouse, and had successfully stormed Spain's strongest fortresses, had, by raw troops, a second time, been "not only baffled and disappointed, but disheartened and discontented;" and soon were destined to learn a third appalling lesson, not dreamt of in their philosophy of war—that freemen, fighting for their fire-sides, were not to be subdued even by the conquerors of Europe.

Before proceeding to describe the memorable events of the ever glorious 8th of January, 1815, reflecting the highest renown on American arms, we must give a brief description of the defenses which were thrown up, under the general direction of Major Latour, in the two weeks of cold, wet weather, preceeding the decisive battle for the salvation of New Orleans.

Behind the levees to prevent the Mississippi from overflowing its banks, were narrow strips of dry

land, bordered by dense cypress swamps. The river being ordinarily higher than the marshes, canals, in many places, were cut to utilize the power of the water, descending through them, to turn mill-wheels at their heads. The mode of defense therefore, was obvious and simple, that of obstructing the strip of dry land, on either bank of the river, with transverse barriers behind the mill-races. Such was the famous Jackson intrenchment on the left bank, five miles below New Orleans, on the north side of the old Rodriguez canal, or mill-race, which formed its shallow wet ditch in front. At this narrowest part of the dry land, the intrenched barrier was about a mile long, more than "half of which ran from the river to the wood, the remainder extending into the depth, where the line took a direction towards the left, which rested on a cypress swamp almost impassable." The troops, citizens and slaves, of all classes and conditions, were indefatigable at their labors, and their works, strengthened from day to day, soon inspired confidence. The line, nearly straight, except a short indentation near the woods, necessitated by some deep holes, was very rudely formed, of variable height and thickness, and constructed of every species of material at hand; cotton bales being used near the river; fence-rails serving to revet portions of the parapet; and, within the swamp, where exposed only to musketry fire, it was formed of logs, ten feet apart, laid over each other and the space between filled with earth. On the south side of the canal, close to the river, was a small redoubt serving to sweep the road on the river bank, and enfilade

the front of the intrenchment. Behind the parapet were eight batteries, judiciously placed, mounting thirteen pieces of artillery, 6 to 32-pounders. Across the river was Patterson's marine battery, of nine guns, commanding the plain of Chalmette, aided by the fire of the schooner Louisiana. The infantry behind Jackson's line numbered 3,200 men, of whom only 800 were newly-recruited regulars. General Coffee's 500 men, holding the extreme left of the line, were compelled to stand knee-deep in the mud and water of the swamp, and bivouac on floating logs lashed to the trees.

Two miles higher up the river, the weaker, unarmed men, with their only weapons, picks and shovels, held a second line serving as a rallying position in the event of disaster; and still a third line was established just below the city limits. Jackson's entire force, armed and unarmed, on the left bank of the river, was 4,264, as stated by General Cass, when he was Secretary of War in President Jackson's cabinet.

The defenses on the right bank of the Mississippi, where the strip of dry land, between the river and swamp, varied in width from one to two thousand yards, consisted of four transverse earthen lines, two of which were lower down the river than Jackson's main line, the third about abreast of it, and the fourth a mile and a half still higher up the stream. The *lowest*, at Raguet's old canal, extended but 200 yards from the river, the remaining distance to the swamp, some 1,800 yards, presenting no other obstacle than the ditch. The *second*, a convex

bastioned line, half a mile in rear of the first, was at the narrowest and strongest position on the right bank; but, after Major Latour had marked it out and commenced throwing it up, his orders, unfortunately, were countermanded by superior authority. The *third* line—Jourdan's—important as being

abreast of Jackson's on the left bank, does not appear to have been more than laid out. The *fourth*, behind Boisgervais' canal, three miles below New Orleans, designed to be secured with bastions and redoubts, was incomplete. These right bank lines under command of General Morgan, were feebly

manned with about 800 raw and badly armed militia, some of whom, without food, had marched five miles through deep mud just before going into action.

Under cover of the night of January 7th, Packingham resolved to send 1,500 infantry, with artillery, to attack and carry Morgan's position, and from batteries there enfilade Jackson's intrenchment, while the mass of his army, on the left bank, should storm it in front. These assailants, instead of arriving on the west bank fresh for their difficult task had been much exhausted by previous labor in deepening, widening and prolonging Villerie's canal through which to pass their boats, instead of transporting them over the narrow neck of land by means of rollers as they before had moved their heavy artillery.

Packingham's plan was simple, though he committed the great error of making his principal attack on the left bank, where Jackson was much the strongest in *personnel* and material defenses. Before dawn of the 8th, the assault on the right bank was to be made with vigor by Colonel Thornton then in command, the sound of whose guns was to be the signal for General Gibbs' column, provided with sugar-cane fascines to fill the ditch and scaling ladders to mount the parapet, to storm Jackson's left, while General Keane's column was to threaten the right.

On the afternoon of the 7th, Jackson became satisfied that the weight of the enemy would fall upon the troops on the left bank of the river. The enemy's preparations were everywhere visible, and,

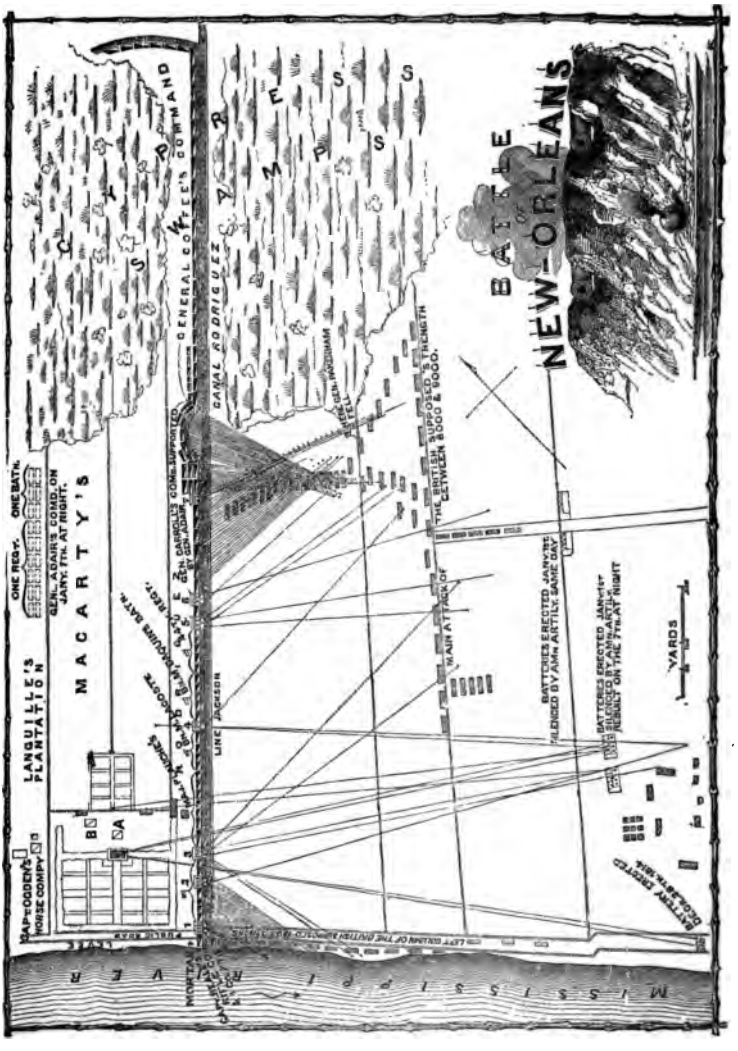
shortly after night-fall, the sound of pick and shovel could be heard reconstructing their destroyed batteries; while their pickets were increased to screen these and other operations. In our camp all was composure, half of the troops alternating with the other half on duty behind the intrenchments; while the whole anxiously awaited at dawn of the calm, cold and lowering morning of the 8th, for the coming of the foe just re-enforced to 10,000 strong. Jackson was roused from his quiet slumber, soon after midnight, by a call for more troops to defend the right bank. "Hurry back," said he to the messenger, "and tell General Morgan he must maintain his position at all hazards, while we resist the main attack which will be made here." However, he ordered 500 Kentuckians to cross the river, while he, with his staff, went to his lines to be ready to ward off the swift coming tempest lowering on his front.

Thornton, who was to open the battle on the right bank of the Mississippi, was delayed by the caving-in of the banks of the Villerie canal, which impeded the passage of the boats. At last, embarking with half his force, he was swept down by the current of the Mississippi a mile and a half below the intended point of debarkation; hence before all had left their boats, the day had dawned, and "battle's magnificently-stern array" was already engaged on the fatal field of Chalmette.

Packingham, after a sleepless night, had advanced Gibbs' and Keane's assaulting columns to within 450 yards of Jackson's entrenchment, Lam-

bert's division being left in reserve. In the misty dawn he was anxiously awaiting Thornton's signal-guns to begin his part in the day's drama. Already our retiring out-posts had apprised Jackson of his danger, when suddenly, as the fog lifted, the red line of British was disclosed to our troops and Lieutenant Spotts, from battery six, opened fire upon it. Instantly a signal rocket went up on the British right, and another on the left. With three cheers and under a cloud of Congreve rockets, with steady and measured tread, supported by the fire of their batteries, on came that brave British infantry, which had so often faced death. Gibbs' close column, sixty files front, protected by the projecting woods, advanced to within 200 yards of our intrenchment, when it became exposed to the fury of batteries six, seven and eight, and the terrible vollies of our Kentucky and Tennessee marksmen, in four ranks, alternating their fire. For some time the British officers stimulated the courage of their troops to move obliquely on battery seven, opening wide gaps through the column, which were instantly filled with fresh troops, to share in turn a like fate. For twenty-five minutes these British veterans endured this lead and iron rain, some of the boldest with matchless courage reaching the brink of the canal; but, without fascines or the ladders which had been left behind, human power had reached its limit, and the whole column, broken, dispersed and disheartened, retreated in the utmost confusion to the shelter of the bushes and the ditch, 400 hundred yards in rear. Here depositing their knap-sacks,

they were rallied, recruited with fresh troops, and again formed for the conflict; but all in vain, for a



column of Spartans could not withstand that American rolling fire of musketry and artillery pouring

forth its messengers of death. Packingham had fallen a victim to his own intrepidity, and Gibbs, the brave leader of the column, had been wounded; yet the surviving officers essayed to make the troops form a third time; but nothing could move them from the ditch in rear, where they passed the remainder of the day.

Some of the enemy's troops made a false attack through the woods to ascertain the feasibility of turning our extreme left in the swamp, but General Coffee's brisk fire soon made them retire.

Keane's column, rapidly moving, soon after Gibbs', along the river bank, followed our retreating out-posts so closely that its advance reached the unfinished redoubt in front of our extreme right, and through its embrasures got possession; but its stay was of short duration under the front fire of our artillery and of the seventh regular infantry, assisted by Patterson's flanking fire of the marine battery on the opposite shore. Like the column on the right, it was obliged to retire in disorder, leaving the road, levee and river bank strewed with its dead and wounded, among the latter being the gallant leader of that forlorn hope. Our artillery was now turned upon the enemy's batteries on the river bank, which, in two hours, became untenable.

General Lambert, now the senior in command, on hearing of the British disaster, came forward with his reserves; but unable to retrieve the fortunes of the day, he abandoned the Aceldama of Chalmette, literally covered with their dead and dying, and contented himself with covering the

retreat of the mutilated and flying wreck of that valiant army, a few hours before so full of hope, pride and confidence.

"As soon as the wrecks of the British column had disappeared," says Major Latour in his Historical Memoir of the Campaign, "the fire of our musketry ceased, and our artillery only fired at intervals at the enemy's batteries, or at scattered platoons that were perceived in the wood. At this time, men from all our different corps, prompted merely by sentiments of humanity, went, of their own accord, to assist the wounded British, to give them drink, and carry them (as they did several on their backs) within our lines. All our troops unanimously applauded the humane sentiments of these brave men, whose dauntless hearts were grieved to behold the slaughter of the day, and in their wounded enemy saw but their suffering fellow creature.

"But, with horror I record the atrocity! while they were in the very act of administering consolation—while they were carrying the wounded British —the troops that were in the ditch (in front of our lines) fired on them, and killed and wounded some men. Yet the others, regardless of the danger to which they exposed themselves, persevered in their laudable purpose. This instance of baseness may have proceeded from individuals; nor can it be presumed that the men were ordered to fire by any officer of rank. The known tenor of General Lambert's honorable and soldierly conduct, sets the commander-in-chief far above the suspicion of his being

capable of such atrocity. But the officers who commanded the troops in the ditch, within musket-shot of the men fired on, cannot allege that they misconceived the intention of our men, most of them being unarmed, and assisting the wounded. They were near enough to see their actions, and seeing these, they could not possibly misconceive their motives. Upon a full view of this fact then, whatever reluctance we may feel, in branding with infamy military men whose actions should ever be directed by honour—men, amongst whom there were perhaps several who wore the honorable decorations of valour and good conduct, we cannot forbear to give them the appellation of barbarians. The private soldiers cannot be reproached with this atrocious act; the the guilt of it rests solely with those who commanded them."

While the great battle was raging on the plain of Chalmette, the British were not idle on the west side of the Mississippi, where, nominally, we had four lines of defense; but, in reality, only one—that behind the Boisgervais canal—of any real strength. Thornton, the British commander, as we have before stated, instead of beginning the conflict, did not disembark on the right bank till after daylight when Packingham was fully engaged. To oppose his landing, General Morgan sent one hundred ill-armed Louisiana militia, under Major Arnaud, to Morin's estate. As was to be expected, this handful of undisciplined men soon took to flight, followed by the enemy's troops and flanked by their three ascending gun-boats. They did not halt till they reached

Davis' 250 weary and poorly armed Kentuckians on Mahew's plantation, about a mile in front of Morgan who had taken position behind the weak intrenchment at Raguet's canal, of which only the 200 yards, next the river, was built. Arnaud's detachment soon took to the woods, and Davis, pressed in front and flank, after firing a few vollies, fell back to Morgan's right, who, with his now total force of 600 men and three small pieces of artillery, had to hold a line over a mile long, of which only a tenth, adjoining the river, was intrenched. Of course he could not long resist the onset of British veterans supported by the flank fire of their gun-boats. Morgan's undefended right being turned and his centre pierced, he spiked and threw into the river his guns, and fled in wild confusion to the Boisgervais intrenchment, when most of the troops were rallied behind this, the only defensible line on the right bank. The British, no longer opposed, pressed forward to the marine battery with the guns of which Patterson had done such terrible execution in sweeping the plain in front of Jackson's intrenchment on the left bank. The Commodore, virtually powerless without infantry supports, turned his fire upon the advancing foe, soon after spiked his guns, and retreated to the Louisiana which he had pushed into the stream out of the enemy's reach.

General Jackson, learning this only disaster of the campaign, immediately sent over General Humbert, an experienced French officer, with 400 troops, to rectify affairs on the west bank of the river. Fortunately while the discussion of seniority in

rank was going on, the enemy withdrew and Thornton re-embarked his troops to join his defeated comrades. Though the operations on the right bank were in striking contrast with the glorious achievements on the left, our loss was only one killed and five wounded, while the casualties of the enemy were 120. On both sides of the river, on the 8th, the Americans had 13 killed, 39 wounded and 19 missing—total 71; while the enemy lost, exclusive of the 120 on the right bank, 700 killed, 1,400 wounded, and 500 prisoners—in all 2,600 men, which is probably an under estimate.

It will naturally be asked, how an army composed of the best veteran troops, accustomed to victory and to overcome all obstacles, utterly failed in a brief conflict against a third of their number of raw levies who never before had seen a battle-field, and who, ill-armed, killed and wounded of their foe one hundred times as many as they lost? The difference was doubtless due to the protection of the intrenchments, behind which were resolute marksmen ably commanded, and fighting for their families and fire-sides. The *highest authority*, General Jackson himself, has said that *not one* British soldier entered his works, "except the wounded, who staggered in, and those who, in the extremity of danger, sought refuge there till the storm should pass away."

For the creation of these field-works, much is due to the Chief Engineer, Major Latour, who, says Jackson, in his general order of January 21, 1815, noticing the conduct of the most meritorious of his

officers, was "useful to the army by his talents and bravery."

According to the testimony of Latour's godchild —Camille Louise Boucher Douvillier, wife of Auguste V. Dulché, of New Orleans—the Major remained some time after 1815 in Louisiana, where he wrote his able and interesting "Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana, in 1814–15." He then went to the Island of Cuba, where he spent four years in Havana, when he returned to his native France, where, in the latter part of 1839, he died in the city of Paris. These meagre details of the life of this excellent engineer we regret are all we have been able to obtain after a very long and most diligent search, in which we have had the intelligent and zealous co-operation of Colonel Edward A. Palfrey, of New Orleans, La.

While the armies were burying their dead on the field of strife, five hostile vessels, as a co-operating force, were endeavoring to reach New Orleans by the Mississippi. From the 9th to the 18th, the enemy threw a thousand shells, with many round and grape shot against Fort St. Philip, which resulted in nothing more than killing two and wounding seven of the feeble garrison. After nine days of fruitless effort, the little British squadron withdrew without spoils or glory.

Having abandoned all hopes of conquering Louisiana, the enemy, after a general exchange of prisoners, without loss, withdrew from his perilous position; and, on the 9th of February, proceeded to besiege Fort Bowyer, which the gallant Major

Lawrence was obliged to surrender on the 12th to a greatly superior force.

The news of peace with Great Britain arrived amid our exultant rejoicings over the great triumph of New Orleans, and while Congress and the whole nation were paying homage to the heroic Jackson and his brave army, which, in less than a month, had terminated the Louisiana campaign, ever memorable in the annals of America; and, in a few hours, had vanquished a powerful foe on the field of Chalmette, washed by the mighty Mississippi, Monarch of Waters, and bordered by morasses where, in wild luxuriance, grew the laurel of the victor and the cypress of the vanquished.

Though this brief campaign was so ably and energetically conducted, and ended the war with Great Britain in a blaze of glory, it had its blemishes, which military criticism must not conceal.

First: Though the defense of Fort Bowyer ended September 15th, in the complete defeat of the British naval and land forces, it is doubtful whether the withdrawal of its gallant commander and garrison from the subsequent Louisiana operations, was compensated by the short retention of a feeble fort, without any after influences on the campaign till its final capitulation, February 12th, an event so humiliating amid our rejoicings and so consoling to the enemy after his great catastrophe at New Orleans.

Second: The seizure of Pensacola, November 7th, though displaying great energy, indomitable will, and reasonable retaliation for past wrongs, hardly

justified the loss of precious time and forces for the capture of some worthless forts, the dispersion of Nicholl's small body of Negro and Indian allies, and the driving away of the British ships to some other equally good harbor; while these acts violated international law, and jeopardized our relations with Spain with which we could not then afford to go to war.

Third: The capture of our Gun-Boats, December 14th, by nine times their number of large, well-appointed and formidably armed British barges, was inevitable; and conclusively proved the neglect of the government in providing only such inadequate naval appliances for the defense of New Orleans, open on every side to approach by water. But, whether these few armed vessels should have been sent on a reconnoissance of the enemy's powerful fleet, which they could not hope to successfully oppose; or have remained in the shallow bayous to prevent the enemy's landing—is quite another question. As adjuncts to the army, they would have been invaluable, as subsequently demonstrated in the distinguished part taken by the navy in the little Carolina and Louisiana.

Fourth: Another serious deficiency was the lack of fortifications adequate to guard the vulnerable points of Louisiana, which were well known to the government by maps and reports made, nearly two years before, by Major Latour and his assistant engineer. That this territory was destined to be invaded was well known, that its scattered and mixed population furnished a feeble defense, and that New

Orleans, the priceless emporium of the mighty Mississippi valley, was almost naked to the enemy.

Fifth: On the arrival, December 2d, of General Jackson at New Orleans, the *personnel* of defense was as appallingly deficient as the *materiel.* He had at hand only two skeleton regiments of newly recruited regulars, the remainder of his force being raw militia drawn from the invaded district. On the 16th, he informed the Secretary of War that neither the Tennessee nor Kentucky troops had arrived, though daily expected. The supply of arms and ammunition was wholly inadequate to the exigency, but was partially remedied by General Carroll's foresight in transferring some of it, slowly descending the Ohio, to his own swifter boats; otherwise, the whole Kentucky re-enforcement would have been weaponless on the day of trial. As it was, 1,500 of them, on the 8th of January, were mere lookers on, having only picks and shovels for arms; and, as stated in Jackson's despatch of Feb. 18, 1815, to the Secretary of War, "when the enemy landed, *he had not a flint* except what was procured from the Baratarians."

Sixth: The political obstacles, in the way of the commanding general's exercise of power, were numerous; but belong to civil rather than to military criticism.

Seventh: So confident were all that the enemy would move upon New Orleans by the Gentilly road, or some other well-known pass, that the Bayou Bienvenue, emptying into the head of Lake Borgne, was unwatched, except by a feeble guard which was cap-

tured by the enemy. It certainly should have been in some way fortified or obstructed to prevent the passage of the enemy's boats; but, whether this neglect was due to the Chief Engineer, or some other officer, we have not been able to ascertain.

Eighth: General Jackson's prompt attack of the enemy soon after his arrival upon the left bank of the Mississippi nine miles below New Orleans, doubtless saved that city; but, as night assaults are almost always attended with much confusion if not fatal disorder, it probably would have been more judicious to have accumulated troops, made all his dispositions under cover of the darkness of December 23d, and surprised the enemy at dawn of the 24th with no unreasonable hope of capturing the whole, or at least a part of this British advance.

Ninth: Rodriguez Canal was a well-chosen position where to dam the torrent of British invasion sweeping onward to overwhelm the rich city of New Orleans, and was sufficiently distant from it to protect the place from the enemy's fire, and at the same time to admit of additional interior lines upon which to fall back in the event of disaster. The energy displayed in strengthening this line, and the judicious application of materials at hand, were admirable; and the three successive defenses, especially that of January 8th, were above all praise.

Tenth: The preparations, on the west bank of the Mississippi, in troops, arms and fortifications, were so defective that a slight accident alone delayed the enemy from promptly pushing up to the Boisgervais line, the only intrenchment on the right bank

of any real strength. Arrived here in time the enemy would have taken in reverse the Rodriguez line on the left bank, possibly turning the tide of battle, causing its complete evacuation, Jackson's retreat to the Dupré line, and the successful storming of the latter weak intrenchment by the large force in front under Packingham.

Eleventh: After the overwhelming defeat of the enemy on the 8th of January, two courses presented themselves to the victor: one to make a vigorous sortie from his works and crush, if possible, the greatly demoralized enemy; the other to maintain his defensive attitude before New Orleans, a city which it was his first duty to save. With veteran disciplined troops, familiar with tactical evolutions, there is no question, according to all the rules of war, that Jackson should have sallied out from behind his intrenchment, destroyed the enemy's heavy artillery in his batteries, and have rapidly pursued and cut to pieces the flying foe; but, with raw militia, badly armed, unskilled in field manœuvres, and having no military experience other than that just gained, it is very doubtful whether it was not better to build a bridge for the enemy's escape, than to fight an army of old troops in the open field. However, as the best critic on the war holds different views, we give General Armstrong's remarks in his own words:

"In General Jackson's official letter of the 9th of January, we have a detail of the important occurrences of the day preceding—exhibiting, on the part of the enemy, a total route, setting at defiance both per-

suasion and authority; a fact, which at once presents the question—why, under such circumstances, the victory had not been consummated, by a prompt and vigorous pursuit of the fugitives. To this question, three answers, different if not discordant, have been given; that of Jackson himself ascribes the omission altogether to 'the defeat of Morgan on the western side of the river'; that of Eaton, the General's biographer and protegé, 'to a want of arms, which the government had failed to supply'; while the historian of Louisiana attributes it to 'a bonhommie,' somewhat akin to the inspiration which, according to Plutarch, prevented Hannibal from entering and sacking Rome at the battle of Cannæ.

"It may not be useless to see how far such reasons will be sustained by rules, probably coeval with war as a science. According to these, 'when, from any cause, you find your enemy weak and dispirited, it becomes your duty to attack him promptly and vigorously,'—'Nothing should prevent you from pursuing a beaten and flying enemy, but a total want of provisions'—'why engage in a war, but to subdue an adversary? And if so, why, after beating him to-day, give him time to rally and fight you to-morrow? The mere possession of a field of battle, is a barren victory'—'Decisive battles shorten wars, and thus confer a benefit on both belligerents.' Yielding, however, to General Jackson, the right of interpreting military maxims, as freely as he was wont to interpret constitutional questions and legal enactments—that is, '*as he understood them*,' still it may be asked, why, if forbidden by prudence and

humanity from destroying a beaten enemy, he should not have followed the example of Cæsar, who, refusing on this ground to fight Africanus, was, at the same time, careful to seize strategic points, cut him off from his supplies, and thus, without shedding a drop of blood, compel him to surrender.

"That the adoption of this policy by Jackson, at any time between the battle of the 8th, and the retreat of the 18th of January, would have had a similar effect on Lambert, will not be doubted by those who know that, during the period we have mentioned, the temper of the British army had been much soured; their discipline greatly impaired; their self-confidence entirely lost; their magazine nearly exhausted; and their only source of supply (the British shipping) eighty miles distant; ten of which were quagmire, furnishing a single, narrow, and dangerous pathway, on which were strategic points, which, if seized and defended, by even small corps, would have completely severed Lambert from his base, and compelled him to choose between a surrender and famine.

"If a pursuit of the enemy on the 8th, was, in the General's opinion, a game too hazardous to be adopted, what, under any view of the subject, prevented a seizure of the cannon, left behind on the field of battle till midnight? A detachment of one hundred men would have anticipated Lambert, and deprived him of his guns, either by removing them, or by knocking off their trunions. The omission to do this is the more extraordinary, as the British batteries, after their abandonment, were

visited, and the guns counted, by a part of Jackson's army."

Twelfth: Having freely discussed our own, let us turn to the enemy's errors, which were even greater.

Having a fleet and numerous light-draught barges, the British had free choice of any of the water-approaches to New Orleans, and after capturing our few gun-boats, could have made a sudden descent anywhere. In fact, without Jackson's knowledge, 2,400 combatants reached the junction of Villerie's canal with the bayou Mazant at four on the morning of December 23d, and before noon took a position on the left bank of the Mississippi, within nine miles of New Orleans, to which there was a good road. At this time Jackson's small undisciplined force was mostly on the Gentilly road, hence no obstacle lay in the way of the enemy, who, by a rapid march, could have reached the defenseless city by 3 P. M., and have captured it before Jackson could have marched to the rescue to save the city from the grasp of the invaders, of whose approach he was entirely ignorant till 1.30 P. M. Failing in this, on the morning of the 24th, when his force had swelled to 4,800 veteran combatants, the enemy certainly could have beaten or have put to flight Jackson's small force of raw troops. The British general's fatal delay till the 28th, gave the energetic Jackson time to throw up intrenchments, and led Packingham then to conclude "that the works to be assailed were not to be longer considered as field-fortifications, but to be proceeded against by a regu-

lar siege," which he undertook, January 1st, when, our artillery fire proving superior to his, the British general deferred further action till the 8th, hoping to gain his object by making a diversion on the right bank of the Mississippi. This latter was very badly executed, in not having sufficient transportation for Thornton's whole force to cross the river; want of punctuality in assembling the boats; making no allowance for the current of the river; having no preconcerted signals between the army, on the left, and the detachment, on the right bank; and finally, through all these delays, nullifying the entire effect of the demonstration by letting its action *follow* instead of *precede* the *main operation.* But much the greater mistake was in not making the movements on the left bank subsidiary to those on the right, where the fortifications were weak; their defenders few, ill-armed and undisciplined; and where, from deficiency of water-craft, re-enforcements could not have been transported across the river in time to prevent the storming of the Bois-gervais intrenchment, the only real obstacle between the enemy and New Orleans.

CHAPTER NINTH.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF ENGINEERS,

ENGAGED IN THE

CAMPAIGNS OF THE WAR OF 1812-15.

BRIG.-GENERAL CHARLES GRATIOT.

1787–1855.

Charles Gratiot was born, August 29, 1787, at St. Louis, Mo., then Louisiana Territory. His ancestors were Huguenots, who, upon the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, were compelled to emigrate from France to escape religious persecution. They took refuge in Switzerland, carrying with them their morals and industry.

Charles Gratiot, the father, after whom the subject of this sketch was named, was born, in 1747, at Lausanne on Lake Geneva; was adopted by an uncle, by whom he was educated in London, as a protestant; when twenty years old, became a merchant in Montreal, Canada; and, being possessed of strong sense and energy, was placed at the head of a trading expedition beyond the Great Lakes, where

he founded the old British post of Cahokia, and obtained great wealth and influence. His share in sustaining General George Rogers Clarke's conquest of the North-west Territory, from the British, in 1778, is well known; and, so highly did the Colony of Virginia appreciate these efforts in her behalf, that she designed to present Gratiot with 30,000 acres of land in Kentucky, the fulfilment of which purpose his generous nature failed to claim at the time when the Ancient Dominion acknowledged the debt, and which, unfortunately for his descendants, was not subsequently confirmed when Virginia became one of the United States of America.

As a slight recognition of the father's generous and efficient services, President Jefferson, a Virginian, soon after the acquisition of Louisiana from France, appointed his eldest son, CHARLES, a Cadet of the U. S. Military Academy, which he entered July 17, 1804. Upon his graduation therefrom, October 30, 1806, he was promoted, in the Army, to be Second Lieutenant of the Corps of Engineers, in which arm of the service he remained for thirty-two years, passing through all its grades to the highest—that of Chief Engineer. While yet a Cadet, he was detailed for duty at Governor's Island, New York Harbor, and was then sent to Rocky Mount, S. C., as an assistant engineer upon the works there in progress. Upon his promotion, February 23, 1808, to be a Captain, he was ordered to Charleston, S. C., as principal assistant upon the fortifications in that harbor, then under the superintendence of Major Alexander Macomb. In the fall of this same year

he took charge, temporarily, of the coast defenses of North Carolina, and, some months later, became engineer on the staff of General Wade Hampton, whose headquarters were near Natchez. In the spring of 1810 the Captain was ordered to West Point, N. Y., where he remained in command of the Post (exclusive of the Military Academy) till 1811, during the absence of Colonel Williams, then Chief Engineer.

The day after his hearing of the Declaration of War against Great Britian, Captain Gratiot, being then at St. Louis visiting his parents during his leave of absence, immediately proceeded to Washington to ask for active service; and was at once appointed Chief Engineer of the North Western Army, with orders to stop *en route* at Pittsburg to aid in the preparation of ordnance and ordnance stores for General Harrison's forces then in the field. Not till November, 1812, could Captain Gratiot and his escort of 300 men move, with the heavy train of twelve pieces of artillery and two hundred loaded vehicles, to Lower Sandusky through an almost trackless wilderness where a wheel had never rolled. After persistently overcoming winter's cold, bad roads, want of forage, and numerous other difficulties, he delivered, January 5, 1813, his whole charge, without even the loss of a bullet, to the Commander-in-Chief, who, soon after Winchester's defeat, directed Gratiot to join him without delay at Maumee Rapids. He promptly obeyed; crossed the Black Swamp; in forty-eight hours reported to Harrison; and received his warm acknowledgments, not only for his

great despatch, but also for 6,000 cartridges he had brought in his own sled, without which the troops there would not have been able to make the least resistance, had they been attacked.

It is unnecessary to repeat what we have so fully given in chapter third, respecting Harrison's marches and counter-marches; of the selection by Captain Gratiot, February 3–4, 1813, of the excellent defensive position on the right bank of the Maumee; its occupation by the North Western Army; and of the energetic construction of Fort Meigs by Captain Wood.

During the Spring of 1813, Gratiot's labors, anxieties and exposure had brought on a severe typhus fever, from which he was hardly convalescent when the first attack was made on Fort Meigs. Notwithstanding, he took charge, day and night, of a battery, and managed it with such ability and effect as to call forth special encomiums in general orders.

After the battle of the Thames, Harrison, with the élite of his army, moved to the Niagara frontier, leaving in Upper Canada and Michigan a broken and disorganized force of about 2,700 men, under General McArthur. This officer, and others of rank present at the fall of Detroit in 1812, were summoned as witnesses before a Court Martial, to be convened at Albany, for the trial of Major-General Hull. The withdrawal of every officer of rank and experience embarrassed the commander not a little. To remedy the evil, so far as practicable, it was suggested by General Lewis Cass, just appointed by Harrison Military Governor of Michigan, that a commission

in the State militia could be issued to any one of the subordinates in whom confidence was reposed, and thus obviate the difficulty. This suggestion being approved, Captain Gratiot was brevetted, October 5, 1813, Colonel of Michigan Militia, and placed at the head of a responsible command of militia and regulars, with headquarters at Malden, the country around which Proctor had devastated upon his recent retreat, having also exhausted Michigan of its resources. Under these circumstances, and with a depleted quartermaster and commissary department, it was no easy matter to subsist an army and prevent the starvation of the inhabitants; yet the new Colonel, by his excellent discipline and admirable management, so well provided for both, during the entire winter and ensuing spring, that not a single complaint was made, nor punishment inflicted. In recognition of these services, one of the counties of the State of Michigan has been named Gratiot.

After our recovery of Detroit and Michigan Territory, General McArthur, commanding the Eighth Military District, the better to secure these acquisitions against British and Indian incursions, and cover, in case of disaster, the retreat of an expedition he designed sending in the spring to recapture St. Josephs and Mackinaw, directed works to be erected at the outlet of Lake Huron, the construction of which was committed to Gratiot, who, with a force of 300 men, fortified the heights at the head of St. Clair Straits. In six weeks the works were completed, and, in honor of the engineer, when the fleet subsequently passed this point of

security, both the land and sea commanders, in expression of their approval, gave the fort the name of Gratiot, which it has since borne.

The naval expedition under Commander St. Clair, with the land forces commanded by the gallant Colonel Croghan, did not leave Detroit till the beginning of July, 1814, the details of which we have given in our chapter on that campaign. Gratiot accompanied this expedition, and participated in all its operations, particularly the attack on Fort Mackinaw, August 4, 1814, and while in command of a detachment landed, September 13, 1814, near the mouth of the Natewasaga River, and succeeded in destroying six months' supplies of provisions deposited there by the enemy for transportation to Mackinaw.

After the Proclamation of Peace with Great Britain, Gratiot was promoted, February 9, 1815, to be a Major and was assigned to the supervision, in 1816, of the fortifications of Delaware River and Bay.

Under the Treaty of Ghent, Mackinaw and its dependencies were surrendered to us. Gratiot, as Chief Engineer of Department No. 3 (embracing Michigan and the North West Territories) in 1817, accompanied the troops destined to garrison these works, which he put into a partial state of defense, and established the post of Green Bay.

Among the first works projected by the Board of Engineers were those for the defense of the great anchorage called "Hampton Roads," at the mouth of James River. The construction of these works—

Fort Monroe and Fort Calhoun (now Wool)—was intrusted in 1819 to Major Gratiot—a marked compliment to him, they being among the most important defenses on the entire Atlantic coast. For ten years he was engaged upon the rip-rap foundation of Fort Calhoun, and in building Fort Monroe, the largest in area and the equal in armament of any of the coast defenses of the United States.

Soon after the death of Major-General Jacob Brown, the Chief Engineer—Alexander Macomb—was appointed to succeed him as General-in-Chief, the place, left vacant, being filled, May 24, 1828, by the promotion of Lieut.-Colonel Gratiot to be Chief Engineer with the rank of Colonel, he being at the same time brevetted a Brigadier-General, U. S. Army, "for meritorious services and general good conduct."

As Chief Engineer of the Army, and (*ex-officio*) Inspector of the Military Academy, General Gratiot, with headquarters at Washington City, continued in the active performance of his varied and responsible duties till December 6, 1838, when, most unexpectedly to himself, his corps, the whole army, and his numerous friends, he was dismissed by the President of the United States, for "having failed to pay into the Treasury the balance of the moneys placed in his hands, in 1835, for public purposes, after suspending therefrom the amount which he claims to be due him on settlement of accounts, according to the President's order, communicated to him by the Secretary of War on the 28th November, 1838; and having neglected to render his accounts in obedience to the law of January 31, 1823."

While we think the President's summary dismissal of a meritorious officer, upon an *allegation* of defalcation, was, to say the least, very harsh; and that Gratiot was entitled to a fair trial by his military peers—we cannot justify the General's course in the premises, notwithstanding all its extenuating circumstances. Though he was charged with retaining a much larger sum of government funds than was subsequently proved; though, for years, he had endeavored to secure an equitable adjustment of his accounts with the Treasury, and was ready to pay over any balance that might be due; though his only supposed redress was in compelling suit against him, as he could not bring an action against the government; and though this mode of reasoning was sound in his own mind; yet, while believing him not guilty of an intentional violation of a trust, we cannot justify him in taking the law into his own hands, and doing wrong that good might come.

It would lead us beyond the limits of this brief sketch to take up the various issues of this case; we must, therefore, limit ourselves to giving the conclusion of the Report of the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate, made August 31, 1852, on the memorial of General Gratiot:

"The case of General Gratiot, who was the Chief of the Corps of Engineers, in the Army of the United States, has been so elaborately discussed in every circle, and so fully reported upon to Congress, that the history of the whole case is familiar to every one.

"The alleged grievance, which constitutes the

cause of his dissatisfaction, was the summary dismissal of the petitioner from the army, in the year 1838, by the President of the United States—first, upon the plea that the power thus exercised was arbitrary, and contrary to the true meaning and intent of the act of Congress conveying it; and secondly, that a defalcation in the accounts of the petitioner, which was the cause assigned for the removal, did not and never did exist in truth.

"In support of his first plea, the petitioner exhibits a mass of testimony, which is certainly entitled to be very calmly weighed and measured; and among the same is the opinion of the General Commanding-in-Chief, upon a parallel case, than which no authority can be higher.

"In support of the second plea, he denies totally the truth of the charge of defalcation, and contends that he is not, and never was indebted to the United States for moneys misused by him, and that a just and legal adjustment of his accounts will bring the United States in debt to him; that the withholding of the funds, upon the demand of the Secretary of War, was a measure of self-defense, justified by the circumstances of the case, and that he was then and is now prepared for an equitable settlement, which is his demand and desire.

"It seems to the committee that both of the pleas are reasonable, and should receive attention, urged as they are, with the earnestness of conscious rectitude, by a gallant soldier, who has acquired a right to be heard from the blood he has spilled in battle.

"Further than this the committee regret that they cannot go, as it is not in their power to afford an adequate remedy by recommending the passage of any law for the relief of the petitioner, and they therefore ask to be discharged from the further consideration of the subject."

From such an unexpected reverse it was not easy to recover, though he bore up under his misfortune most wonderfully, hoping, for years, that some happy turn of the wheel of fortune would bring him relief. Poverty, however, soon stared him in the face, compelling him to accept, in 1840, the position of a common clerk in the Land Office at Washington. He who had so bravely battled for his country, and was the son of one who had so disinterestedly lavished his wealth in the acquisition of a vast territory forming so many of our rich Northwestern States, to be cast down from one of the most honored places in the land to the lot of a subordinate clerkship, was truly a sad change and a most melancholy spectacle. He struggled on, loved by those who knew his worth, respected by the whole community in which he lived, and in conscious rectitude cheerful to the last, was released by death from all earthly trouble, May 18, 1855, at St. Louis, Mo., which had grown from a wilderness to be a great city in the sixty-seven years he had lived.

Professor William H. C. Bartlett, one of General Gratiot's most intimate friends, sends to us the following beautiful summary of his character: "His mind was clear, capacious and well poised; and as an administrator, he had few superiors. His life—

private and public—was adorned with the finest traits of humanity. Genial and hospitable by disposition, his door was ever open and his well-supplied table was accessible to all who had a right to seek them, especially to the younger members of his profession. He was a kind and devoted husband; a tender and indulgent parent; a tried and steadfast friend; and, as a fitting finish to his well rounded character, nature had given him that chiefest of all the virtues, an abundant charity.

"The writer of this willing tribute to his cherished memory was associated with him for many years on terms of closest official and social intimacy, and he can recall no instance of his ever having uttered a disparaging judgment of the motives of others. And even when oppressed by the wrongs that separated him from the Army and afterwards by a personal rudeness from a quarter in whose behalf he had long exerted to its utmost his official influence, he never forgot his self-respect, but his last words, like those of his Divine Master in affliction, only uttered forgiveness, and he died in the full faith of the ultimate triumph of truth and a confident belief that time would vindicate his good name. He was not mistaken. General Gratiot was a pure and good man in the largest and best meaning of these terms."

CAPTAIN WILLIAM PARTRIDGE.

1788–1812.

WILLIAM PARTRIDGE, born, 1788, in Vermont, was graduated October 30, 1806, at the Military Academy and promoted to be Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers; served till 1812 at West Point and on the defenses of Charleston Harbor, S. C.; and, having attained the rank of Captain, July 1, 1812, became Chief Engineer of General Hull's army; ill-health, however, preventing his taking any active part in the campaign.

Hull, preceding his capitulation at Detroit, called a council of war under the parapet in old Fort Shelby, during which much was said against the necessity of a surrender, not a single officer present being in its favor. When Hull, to the astonishment of the whole council, announced his determination to capitulate, he ordered Captain Snelling of the Fourth Infantry "to cross the river with a flag," to which the indignant Captain replied, "I'll see you in h—l first," when the General's Aide-de-Camp—Captain Hull—was directed to perform that humiliating duty of capitulation. Captain Partridge, one of the council, when Hull proclaimed his decision, broke his sword across his knee and threw the pieces at the General's feet. Of course Partridge became a prisoner of war by the surrender of Detroit and its garrison; but a month after, September 20, 1812, he died in the enemy's hands at the early age of twenty-four.

BRIG.-GENERAL SYLVANUS THAYER.

1785–1872.

SYLVANUS THAYER was born, June 9, 1785, at Braintree, Mass.; received a classical education at Dartmouth College, N. H.; was graduated, when twenty-three, from the Military Academy; entered the Corps of Engineers, February 23, 1808, a Second Lieutenant; as Captain, was the Acting Chief Engineer to Major-General Hampton in 1813, his senior, Major McRee, being in command of the artillery train; rose through all the successive grades to Colonel; was, after a brilliant military career of more than half a century, retired from active duty; became a Brevet Brigadier-General "for distinguished and meritorious services"; and died, September 7, 1872, at South Braintree, Mass., near where he was born, at the advanced age of eighty-eight.

As General Thayer's biography belongs chiefly to the history of the Military Academy, of which he was justly styled "The Father," we will only add, in this place, that subsequently to the Campaign of 1813, he performed no other duty in this war, except that of Chief Engineer, in 1814, to Bvt. Brig.-General Moses Porter's forces in the defense of Norfolk, Va., where, "for his meritorious services," he was brevetted a Major in the United States Army.

BRIG.-GENERAL RENÉ E. DE RUSSY.

1789–1865.

RENÉ E. DE RUSSY, born, February 22, 1789 in the Island of Hayti, West Indies, was of noble ancestry dating back to the Crusader, Sir Armolot de Russy, who served under Richard Cœur de Lion. His father, Thomas De Russy, a native of St. Malo, France, was a Midshipman in the War of the Revolution, subsequently brevetted by Dr. Franklin (one of our Commissioners to France) to a Lieutenancy for his meritorious conduct in the action of the "Pallas," of Paul Jones' fleet, which captured the "Countess of Scarborough" off Flamborough Head, September 23, 1779, the same night on which took place the desperate battle of the "Bon Homme Richard" against the British ship "Serapis," aided by the traitor Landais in the "Alliance." After the Revolution, Thomas De Russy came with Paul Jones to America, where he had a flattering reception. On returning to France he sold his patrimonial estates and emigrated to St. Domingo, where he purchased a plantation. The doctrines of equality and freedom for all, proclaimed by the French National Convention, designed to be confined exclusively to the whites, soon had their logical sequence when the blacks, in 1791, rose in insurrection and committed the most horrible atrocities. Thomas de Russy, with the sagacity of an experienced sailor, early provided a retreat for his family. His infant son René, was carried in the nurse's arms on

board an American vessel of War, then at anchor in the harbor of Port au Prince, the father barely escaping capture when seeking the same refuge. On the arrival of the ship in the United States, the former services of Thomas De Russy were not forgotten, and, accordingly, two of his sons—René and Louis—when of the proper age, were placed in the Military Academy to be educated.

René E. De Russy was appointed a Cadet, March 20, 1807, and upon his graduation from the U. S. Military Academy, was promoted to be Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers, June 10, 1812, from which he rose through all the successive grades till he became Colonel, March 3, 1863.

A week after De Russy's entrance into the Army, war was declared by the United States against Great Britain, he being then engaged as an assistant engineer on the fortifications of New York harbor. The next year, September 6, 1813, he reported at Sackett's Harbor, to Brig.-General Joseph G. Swift, the Chief Engineer of Wilkinson's army then about to descend the St. Lawrence. In this campaign he was engaged in reconnoitring the approaches to the river; in the repulse of the British flotilla, November 1–2, at the mouth of French Creek; and in the battle of Crysler's Field, November 11, 1813. When this army left its winter quarters at French Mills, De Russy accompanied Wilkinson to Lake Champlain, and was engaged in the attack of La Cole Mill, March 30, 1814. After Wilkinson was superseded, De Russy continued with that army and took an active part, under Major Totten, in the construc-

tion of the defenses of Cumberland Head and Plattsburg. In the battle of September 11, 1814, at the latter place, he was conspicuous; was highly complimented in the commanding general's official despatch; and was brevetted a Captain for his "gallant conduct." After Governor Provost's defeat, Major Totten joined General Izard on his march to the Niagara frontier, which left Captain De Russy the Chief Engineer of General Macomb's Division. After the war, till 1833, he was principally engaged upon the defenses of Rouse's Point, of New York harbor, and of the Gulf of Mexico.

While in charge of these latter works, Major-General Andrew Jackson was in command of the Southern Military Division of the United States, and, upon our acquisition of Florida from Spain in 1821, was made Governor of that Territory. Jackson wishing the services of his nephew—Lieutenant A. J. Donelson, of the Corps of Engineers—then on duty with the Captain, requested De Russy to consent to his transfer to the General's command in order to become his private Secretary. Of course the courteous De Russy assented, which obliging complaisance had doubtless no small influence in the old hero's selection, when President of the United States, of Major De Russy to succeed Colonel Thayer in the Superintendency of the Military Academy, in the command of which he continued till September 1, 1838. His predecessor had left the institution in so flourishing a condition, that little more was to be done than to continue its forward impulse. However, under De Russy's administration, the present fine Academic

Hall was commenced; a Professorship of Chemistry, Mineralogy and Geology was created; and many minor additions were made to the public buildings. At the same time he found leisure to devise, in 1835, a Depressing Gun-Carriage for Sea-Coast Barbette Batteries, containing the principles of the after device of Colonel Moncrieff of the British Army, to whom in Europe the credit of the invention, due to De Russy, is generally given. The working model of this carriage which was then deposited in the Engineer Bureau at Washington, was exhibited at the Centennial Exhibition in the Government Building, in the summer of 1876, and attracted much attention among military men. It was during De Russy's superintendency that the Old Library Building was burned, February 19, 1838, with most of the archives of the Academy, and the Revolutionary records of the post of West Point.

From the time De Russy was relieved from the Military Academy till the beginning of the Rebellion, he was in charge of the defenses of Hampton Roads, Va. (Forts Monroe and Calhoun), except from 1854 to 1857 while fortifying the entrance to San Francisco Bay, Cal. At the same time he directed many river and harbor improvements in the States of Delaware and Virginia; was a member of various boards, particularly for coast-defense and internal improvements; and from December 22, 1858 to January 2, 1861 was in command, at Washington, of the Corps of Engineers.

After the Rebellion he was ordered to San Francisco, where he remained till he died, November 23,

1865, at the age of seventy-six, he then being the oldest graduate of the Military Academy in active service; the senior Colonel of the Corps of Engineers; and a Brevet Brigadier-General, U. S. Army, "for long and faithful service."

General De Russy was a *preux chevalier* of the old school of gentlemen; always affable, ever refined, punctiliously polite, and lavish in hospitality, as the many distinguished persons who sat at his board, among them the Prince de Joinville and Louis Napoleon, can testify. He was, besides, a devoted husband, a tender parent, a faithful friend, and a most loyal soldier. Major-General Halleck, commanding the Division of the Pacific, in directing military honors to be paid to his memory, concludes his order by saying: "Of great kindness of heart, and possessing most urbane and polished manners, he was endeared to a large circle of friends, and the surviving graduates of the Military Academy who were educated under his superintendence, will cherish his memory as that of the kindest of fathers. By his strict integrity in the expenditure of many millions of public money, his faithful discharge of every duty of office and of life, and his unsullied honor, he has left an example most worthy of imitation."

LIEUTENANT GEORGE TRESCOT.

1798–1827.

GEORGE TRESCOT was born in South Carolina, from which State he was appointed, March 11, 1813, a Cadet of the Military Academy, when, at that time there were few pupils and little instruction. Seven months later, October 16, 1813, he, constituting his entire class, was graduated from the institution, and immediately ordered to join Wilkinson's army on the St. Lawrence, reaching it in time to participate in the battle of Chrysler's Field, November 11, 1813. When the army went into winter quarters at French Mills, he assisted in fortifying the camps of the Northern Army, which, subsequently, he accompanied to Lake Champlain. As an assistant to Major Totten, he was engaged in the construction of the defenses of Cumberland Head and Plattsburg, taking a conspicuous part, September 11, 1814, in the battle at the latter place, in which for his "gallant conduct" he was brevetted a First Lieutenant. After this battle, he accompanied Major-General Izard to the Niagara frontier.

He was promoted, February 9, 1815, to be a First Lieutenant of Engineers; in 1816, was ordered to superintend the repairs of the South Carolina and Georgia Coast Defenses; in 1818, became an Assistant Engineer in the construction of the Gulf fortifi-

cations; and March 31, 1819, resigned from the Army.

Becoming now a rice planter on Cooper River, near Charleston, S. C., he resided there till May 12, 1827, when he died at Pine Ridge, St. John's Parish, S. C.

LIEUTENANT HENRY C. STORY.

18——1823.

HENRY C. STORY, brother of the late Justice Story of the United States Supreme Court, was appointed in the Army from Massachusetts, to be Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers, March 11, 1814. He was attached to the Company of Bombardiers, Sappers and Miners, with which he served during the Campaign of 1814 on the Niagara frontier, and, for his gallant conduct in the Sortie from Fort Erie, Upper Canada, was brevetted, September 17, 1814, a First Lieutenant. After the war he was engaged in various engineer duties; was promoted, April 15, 1818, to a full First Lieutenancy; and died, July 28, 1823.

CHAPTER TENTH.

JOURNAL

OF THE

NORTHWESTERN CAMPAIGN OF 1812-13,

UNDER

MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

BY

BVT. LIEUT.-COLONEL ELEAZER D. WOOD,

CAPTAIN CORPS OF ENGINEERS, U. S. ARMY.

MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM H. HARRISON, having been appointed to the command of the Northwestern Army, arrived at Upper Sandusky early in January, 1813, with two brigades of militia, under Brigadiers Leftwich and Crooks, the former from Virginia and the latter from Pennsylvania, together with a few regulars and volunteers, making a force in all of about 1,500 men. These troops principally constituted, and were denominated, the right wing of the Army. The object in raising of which, seemed to have been the security of the Northwestern frontier; the expulsion of the enemy from the Michigan Territory; and the invasion of Upper Canada, the latter, *particularly* for the reduction of Malden. These important objects, if attained at all, were to be attained with a force almost entirely composed of *raw militia*. As the officers were utterly

ignorant of their duty, or to use the words of a worthy young officer in service, "many of them incapable of learning it," and the men entirely unaccustomed to obedience or subordination, it became necessary to halt the army a few days at this place to equip, and, as far as possible, to establish some little system of discipline. A halt was equally necessary to await the arrival of the field battering train of artillery; the latter, consisting of five 18-pounders, were required for the Siege of Malden; also the provisions, forage and ordnance stores. Everything was done by the General that possibly could be accomplished towards establishing subordination and discipline among the troops; but men who, at that inclement season of the year, had just left their comfortable dwellings to endure the hardships and privations incident to a winter campaign in the wilderness, were not to be made soldiers of in fifteen, or even twenty days! But as much was required, every human exertion must be made. A large proportion of the troops were on daily duty, in building block-houses and store-houses, the latter to deposit the supplies in, and the former for their protection; in fact, the aspect of affairs announced the speedy approach of that state of preparation necessary to the commencement of active operations.

About the 12th, the artillery came into camp, and large quantities of every kind of supplies were constantly arriving.

At Upper Sandusky was established the principal depot of the army. This place is situated on the Sandusky River, about sixty miles from the Lake,

forty above Lower Sandusky, thirty from Norton, and seventy from the Rapids of the Miami. These two rivers, the Miami and Sandusky, are thirty-six miles apart, and the country, which lies between them, is almost an entire marsh, or sunken swamp; which, on account of its being miry and generally covered with an immense body of water, can scarcely be passed at any other time than in the summer or middle of winter, after its waters are sufficiently frozen to bear the traveller. Through the middle of this marsh runs the Portage River, which, like an aqueduct, receives, conveys and empties its waters into Lake Erie, about two miles west of the Sandusky Bay. The Rapids of the Miami are about eighteen miles from the Lake, sixty from Fort Wayne, and thirty-six from the River Raisin, which latter place is only eighteen miles from the village of Brownstown, situated opposite to Amherstburg, and twenty miles below Detroit.

Brig.-General Winchester, who commanded the left wing of the Army, consisting of one thousand Kentucky Volunteers and the Regulars, had been directed to take the route of Fort Wayne; as well for the purpose of strengthening that place, as to construct blockhouses and stockades, at such other points as he might deem best calculated for the defense and security of the inhabitants along the frontier. And as soon as the preparations of the right wing should be found sufficiently matured to enable it to commence operations against the enemy, it was understood that he was to descend the Miami, and the two corps form a junction at the foot of the

Rapids. This was an excellent plan; for by dividing the troops and sending them different routes, with a view of concentrating somewhere in the neighborhood of the enemy, the operations of the army would not only be facilitated, but the frontier would be more effectually protected.

Parties had been sent on ahead to open roads, bridge creeks, and prepare the way as much as possible for the army, which it was expected would soon follow. The artillery had already arrived and been sent on towards the Rapids; and time, patience, perseverance and fortitude, seemed only necessary to enable the army to surmount the numerous obstacles, which nature alone had raised to its future glory.

General Perkins, with five or six hundred Ohio militia, was at Lower Sandusky, where he had been stationed some time for the immediate protection of the inhabitants along the margin of the Lake; and General Tupper, with about as many more militia, was somewhere in the Black Swamp (such is denominated that part of the country lying between Upper Sandusky and the Rapids), west of the route from Upper Sandusky to the Miami; no one could tell exactly where. This latter named General had sometime previously been sent on an expedition against the Indians who were then lying opposite to the Rapids, and by whom he was readily met and compelled to fall back. This affair was not thought altogether honorable to the General; however, his conduct afterwards underwent an investigation, and was approved by the Commanding-General.

About the 15th of January intelligence was

brought to camp that General Winchester had already arrived at the Rapids, and that he intended advancing immediately to the River Raisin. This news, for a moment, paralyzed the army; or at least the reflecting part of it. General Harrison was astonished at the imprudence and inconsistency of such a step, which, if carried into effect, could be viewed in no other light than as attended with inevitable destruction to the corps. Nor was it a difficult matter for a man entirely destitute of theory or a knowledge in the art of war, to forsee the terrible consequences which were certain to mark the result of a *scheme, no less rash in its conception, than hazardous in its execution.*

But what human means within the control of the General, could prevent the anticipated disaster from taking place, and save the left wing of the army, which was already looked upon as destined for destruction? Certainly none; because neither orders nor troops could reach him in time. Besides, he was already in motion, and General Harrison still at Upper Sandusky, seventy miles in his rear; the weather inclement, the snow deep, and a considerable portion of the Black Swamp yet open. What could a Turenne or an Eugene have done, under such a pressure of embarrassing circumstances, more than Harrison did? He directed General Leftwich to put his brigade in motion for the Rapids; mounted his horse and started for Lower Sandusky, whence he took a part of General Perkins' brigade, and pushed with all possible expedition for the River Raisin.

General Proctor had posted a small party at the

River Raisin to watch our motions, and co-operate with the Indians in their predatory incursions upon our frontier.

General Winchester arrived at the River Raisin and attacked this picquet on the 18th of January; a few were killed, some prisoners were taken and the rest driven off. Thus had the left wing, become the van, fought a battle, gained a victory, covered itself with glory; and all at a very little expense too. But the temerity of an insult, thus offered in the very teeth of the enemy, was not long to go unpunished; and the very authors of it were the ill fated creatures who were to receive the chastisement due to the folly and rashness of their conduct. However, elated with this flush of success, the troops were permitted to select for themselves such quarters as pleased and suited them best in the village on the west side of the river, whilst the General posted himself on the east. Not the least regard was paid to order or regularity in the quartering of the men. No fortifications were erected nor any information obtained of the enemy, or what he was about, although but twenty miles distant.

Having obtained the necessary information of the strength and manner in which General Winchester's corps was quartered (for it was not encamped), on the morning of the 22d of January, at break of day, the enemy approached and commenced a most furious attack upon the right with cannon and musketry, whilst the Indians advanced upon the ice in the rear, and separated at once the General from his troops, of which he was never able afterwards to

take command, nor to join until he met with them in captivity.

The troops on the right, which were first attacked, attempted to change their position, in doing which they were thrown into confusion, and mostly very soon captured; the left, consisting of about 500 men under Major Madison, conducted much better; they were posted behind some old pickets, which served them as a breastwork, and which enabled them to maintain their position till 10 or 11 o'clock in the forenoon; when, having entirely exhausted their ammunition, they were compelled to lay down their arms and submit to the *indignities* of an *Englishman*, and the *cruelties* of a *Savage*.

The enemy suffered much on this occasion; and perhaps, may with propriety, be said to have paid dear for the laurels of the 22d of January, which, by the inhuman and barbarous treatment of his prisoners, were withered on his brow, ere he could leave the crimsoned plain on which they seemed untimely gathered.

How many of our troops were killed and wounded in this engagement, has never been correctly ascertained; but the loss is supposed to have been very great, for the number in battle. The dead were left lying as they fell, and have never been buried to this day; and such of the wounded as were not tomahawked upon the field, were put into houses and Indians furnished as attendants; who, on receiving a large quantity of whiskey from General Proctor, as a sign of approbation, set fire to the

whole of them, and in one volume of flame, sent their contents all to heaven!

Thus were these, a corps of 1,000 men (the élite of the army too) sacrificed in the most wanton, and reprehensible manner, and that too, without the least benefit to themselves, to their country, or to their posterity. With only one-third of the army, entirely destitute of artillery, of engineers, and with but a very inadequate supply of musket ammunition, what right had General Winchester to believe that he could oppose, successfully, the combined British and Indian forces at and in the vicinity of Malden? to say nothing about his advancing without orders. Until a general has a better claim to victory than General Winchester had at the River Raisin, he will be eternally beaten, whether he expects it or not; and, what is more, eternally ought to be.

General Harrison was unable to get farther than the Miami Rapids, before he had the pain and mortification to meet the fugitives flying from the tragical scenes of the River Raisin. General Harrison immediately fell back upon the Portage River, a distance of fifteen miles, as well for the purpose of covering the artillery, then in the swamp, as to meet the re-enforcements, which were already far advanced from Upper Sandusky, on their way to the Rapids. This position was taken about the 24th of January, and maintained till the 1st of February, when the artillery and re-enforcements having arrived, the army again returned to the Miami, and was encamped upon a beautiful ridge near the foot of the

Rapids, on the right bank of the river, and about 150 yards distant from it. The camp was situated two and a half miles above old Fort Miami, and directly opposite the ground on which old Anthony Wayne gave the Indians such a drubbing in '94. It was judiciously chosen by General Harrison and Captain C. Gratiot of the Engineers, and afterwards fortified with block-houses, batteries and palisadoes, in such a manner as to stand the test of British artillery for five days, closely applied. But this must be spoken of in its proper place.

Here the army lay with its rear to the river, being covered by a considerable ravine in front, which extended round, and communicated with another very deep and wide one, which passed the left, and entirely secured it.

A fine train of artillery (which always gives confidence to troops), consisting of five 18-pounders, six 12-pounders, six 6-pounders and three howitzers, together with a small supply of ammunition having arrived in camp, the countenance of the army began very much to brighten, and the late shock at the River Raisin seemed in some measure to be forgotten.

General Tupper, having found himself, and arrived in camp, our number of troops amounted to about 2,000 or upwards; and General Crooks, who had been left at Upper Sandusky with 600 or 700 men for the purpose of completing a stockade, had not yet made his appearance. It was now about the 10th or 12th of February, when a rumor was spread through camp that a great council was then in session, and that the subject of deliberation was,

whether or no arrangements should not be made immediately for the army to advance against the enemy. That such a council did sit is a fact, and that it was decided that the army should not, or was not in a situation to advance, is also a fact, for although the writer was not one of the council, yet he received his information from a source which could not be doubted.

It was shortly afterwards directed by the General that a camp for 2,000 men should be laid out and strongly fortified; and that this work might be in a state of progression, the lines of the camp were immediately designated, and a large portion of labor assigned among every corps or regiment in the army. Each Brigade or Regiment commenced that particular portion of work which was assigned it, with great vigor and spirit.

The camp was about 2,500 yards in circumference, which distance, with the exception of several small intervals, left for block-houses and batteries, was every foot to be picketed with timber, 15 feet long, from 10 to 12 inches in diameter, and set 3 feet in the ground. Such were the instructions of the engineer. To complete this picketing, to put up eight block-houses (the number required) of double timber, to elevate four large batteries, to build all the store houses and magazines required for the supplies of the army, together with the ordinary fatigues of the camp, was an undertaking of no small magnitude. Besides, an immense deal of labor was to be performed in excavating ditches, making abatis, and clearing away the wood about camp, and all this to

be done too, at a time when the weather was extremely severe, and the ground so hard frozen, that it was almost impossible to open it with a spade and pick-axe. But in the use of the axe, mattock and spade, consisted all the military knowledge of the army. So we fell to work to bury ourselves as fast as possible, and heard nothing of the enemy. The army was tolerably healthy, and well provided with bread and meat; for the woods were literally alive with beeves, hogs, and pack horses loaded with flour.

Somewhere about the 15th of February, intelligence was brought the General that a party of Indians were still lurking near the mouth of the river, at a small cluster of Indian huts, called Presque Isle. A party of spies (for at this time these were the greatest characters in the army), were immediately despatched to the mouth of the river to get all possible information relative to the strength and position of this impudent foe, and after being absent one day and a part of a night, returned and reported that, from what they could discover without giving the alarm (of which they were generally very cautious), they were induced to believe the enemy consisted of about one or two hundred. (There might have been perhaps five or six.) An expedition of 1,100 men was ordered to be in readiness to march the following night against those demons of the wood. The plan and order of march was thus:—Brig.-General Perkins, with 600 men formed in column by companies, at entire distances, and marching by the left, was to leave camp at 8 o'clock in the evening

and move down the river on the ice; at half-past eight, General Tupper, with 500 men formed in the same manner as the preceding corps, was to follow; and General Harrison to command the whole. Every necessary arrangement having been made, the night arrived, and the troops under General Perkins were put in motion, agreeably to orders; and half an hour after, they were followed by General Tupper who was accompanied by General Harrison and staff. On arriving within four or five miles of the destined place, a halt of the front was ordered to give time to the rear to come up, and to await the return of the spies who had been sent ahead to gain further information of the enemy; but as they did not return so soon as was expected, the rear having come up, it was determined to advance; so we moved on within one or two miles of Presque Isle, when the spies were met, and informed that the enemy had burnt a part of the houses, taken their cattle and horses, and gone on to the River Raisin. This was a monstrous disappointment indeed; however, all hopes of meeting with the enemy were not yet fled, as the General, after a short halt, gave directions for the troops to be again put in motion for the River Raisin, in hopes of coming up with the Indians at that place. The night was light, moderately cold, and there was a little snow upon the ice, which enabled us to discover and follow the trail of the enemy. After proceeding six miles further it was found that the men were generally very much fatigued, and that many of them had actually given out, and were not able to march a step further without refreshment and

rest. For this purpose, the army was again halted upon a small island, and fires over the whole of it were instantly built. Here we lay till eight the next morning, when a poor Canadian citizen living near the River Raisin, having been taken a prisoner by a party that went on ahead, and brought in to the General, informed him that the Indians we were in pursuit of had already arrived at the River Raisin, and gone to Malden.

The expedition was therefore abandoned, and the troops ordered back to camp, where they arrived, very much worried and fatigued, at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, after having performed a march of forty-eight miles in twenty-four hours. On this occasion "the mountain had brought forth a mouse," and I thought our *spies deserved to be well scourged.*

The weather being severe, and the ground in many places, where the men had to work, extremely wet and bad, the lines of defense naturally progressed but slowly. No event of any importance occurred for some time. Small parties which were almost constantly passing between the different posts, were not unfrequently attacked by the Indians, though usually but little damage was done. It was not uncommon for the enemy to be about the camp at night, but probably his presence was more frequently imagined by the sentinels, than real, for scarcely a night passed without one, two or three alarms, and the army as often turned out under arms. The practice of turning the troops out because a frightened sentinel happens to hear a rustling in the bushes, or a bug fly over his head, is one

of the most absurd practices that ever entered into the head of a general, and is no less destructive to an army than an epidemic among the troops. Vain and unnecessary alarms were never known in the Camps of Condé, nor will they ever be made within any camp where the general correctly understands and performs his duty.

About the 20th, General Crooks (not a man of books), who had been left to complete the stockade at Upper Sandusky, having finished that duty had been ordered on to headquarters, and arrived at a time when the services of his men were very much wanted indeed.

A plan was now set afoot for the burning of the Queen Charlotte, a British vessel then lying by the wharf at Amherstburgh, *immediately under the guns of Malden.* But *that made no difference—she was to be burnt.* To carry this enterprise into execution, Captain Langham, a very gallant officer, was selected with one hundred men; Major Stoddard of the artillery, and Captain Wood of the Engineers, were directed to prepare suitable combustibles for the destruction of the unfortunate Queen; to prevent distortion of features, and to preserve her beauty to the last moment, it was determined not to administer this inflammable dose by her head but by her tail—or stern.

Everything preparatory to the enterprise having been reported ready, the forlorn hope (if there ever was one) was paraded; the General made a few observations to them, setting forth the dauntless courage of their Commander, and the important

national advantages which must certainly result from the destruction of this Lady of the Lake; when, having finished, Captain L. put himself at the head of his party and moved off by the way of Lower Sandusky for Malden. Sleighs were got at Lower Sandusky in which the party proceeded to Put-in-Bay, where they discovered that the lake was quite open between them and Amherstburgh, and that it was utterly impossible for the object of the expedition to be accomplished; so, after being absent several days, they steered for the mouth of the Miami, and arrived at camp on the 5th of March. Thus did the coquettish Queen disappoint an *ardent* and *sincere* lover, reserving her *smiles* and *charms* for the more fortunate and gallant Perry.

On the 4th, Captain E. D. Wood of the Engineers was sent, by way of the lake to Lower Sandusky, with directions to assume the command of the garrison and to spend ten or fifteen days in constructing such additional works as in his opinion might be found necessary for the security of the Post, and to save it from falling an easy prey should the enemy think its reduction an object worthy of his notice; then to return to the Rapids.

As the presence of General Harrison was no longer particularly required, he gave the necessary instructions to General Leftwich relative to the importance of a vigorous prosecution of the lines of defense, and, on the 6th, left camp for Chillicothe. This became necessary, as well to make arrangements for supplying the army, as to take seasonable measures for getting on a re-enforcement of militia,

to fill the places of the Virginia and Pennsylvania militia whose terms of service would expire, the former on the 2nd and the latter on the 6th of April, leaving (unless re-enforced) not more than 600 or 700 men to garrison and defend the camp at the Rapids. And as there were many sick and unable to perform their duty, it was probable that not to exceed 400 or 500 would by the first of April, be found capable of rendering the least assistance.

General Harrison foresaw the lamentable situation in which the army was likely to be placed, and in consequence of the ebbing and flowing of the militia, endeavored to be as well prepared to meet the event as possible. The two brigades of Ohio militia, under Perkins and Tupper, were already discharged and gone home, and it was generally believed in camp that not one, of either the Virginia or Pennsylvania militia could be prevailed on to remain a single day after the expiration of their legal tour of duty; but to the immortal honor of the latter, in this belief we were happily disappointed. For, on the 6th of April, finding that we were threatened with an immediate attack, and that the Virginians to a man, and to their eternal disgrace, had gone home, their General the first to set the example, and that no re-enforcements had yet arrived, 150 of the Pennsylvania troops very handsomely volunteered their services to remain fifteen days, or even longer in case that re-enforcements should not arrive in the mean time. Finding that it would be impossible, from the badness of the roads and the tardiness of the militia, to get the new draft from

Kentucky on to Camp Meigs by the 1st or even the middle of April, General Harrison had very wisely written to Brigadiers Leftwich and Crooks desiring them to use every honorable means to induce a part of their men to remain a few weeks after their term of service should have expired; and stated to those Generals the dreadful consequences that were likely to attend their leaving the camp with all their men before other troops should arrive to fill their places; and that, in the event of the camp falling into the hands of the enemy, the disaster in a great measure would be attributed to them. But all availed nothing with Leftwich—nothing could excite his feelings nor arouse his patriotism, for he was as destitute of both (except where his interest was concerned) as a Dutchman is of genius and vivacity. The 2d of April arrived, and away went every Virginian belonging to the drafted militia, without the least concern as to what became of those they left behind, or caring whether the enemy or ourselves were in possession of the camp, so long as they could escape from the defense of it.

The conduct of General Leftwich on this occasion was highly reprehensible indeed, for notwithstanding he had received express directions to prosecute the lines of defense with all possible vigor, and to place the camp in the best possible situation to sustain a siege, which it was almost certain sooner or later it would have to undergo, and evidences of which became more apparent every day; yet this phlegmatic, stupid old granny, so soon as General Harrison left camp, stopped the progress of the

works entirely, assigning as a reason that he couldn't make the militia do anything, and therefore they might as well be in their tents, as to be kept out in the mud and water, and accordingly were gratified. So far from improving the works they were permitted to burn the timber, which had been brought into camp with an immense deal of labor, for pickets and block-houses; not only did they burn this timber, but on the 20th of March, when Captain Wood returned from Lower Sandusky, he had the pain and mortification to find several of the men actually employed in pulling the pickets out of the ground, and conveying them off for fuel. On asking them who gave permission for the picketing to be taken down and carried off in that manner, he was informed that no body gave permission, but that it was a common thing for each mess to take what they wanted and nothing was said about it. Was not this most perplexing and vexatious indeed to an officer the least acquainted with our situation, and particularly to one intrusted with the important duty of planning and fortifying the camp, and on the success of which, in the event of a siege, his honor and reputation entirely depended? Captains Croghan, Bradford and Langham of the 17th and 19th regulars had remonstrated in the strongest terms against such an abominable and wanton destruction of work which had been erected with so much labor and trouble; and on which, they foresaw, depended in a great measure the future salvation of the army, but all to no purpose. Captain Wood found great difficulty in stopping the militia from destroying his

works, but much greater in getting them to repair the breaches and depredations already made and committed on the lines.

About this time, near the end of March, the Indians were getting to be quite troublesome round the camp; no party could be sent out after fuel, timber, or anything else without being fired on, and frequently one or two persons killed, and as many more taken prisoners. The militia officers as well as men were frequently in the habit of crossing the river without arms, for the purpose of examining the remains of old Fort Miami, and prowling about to gratify a vain and foolish curiosity, until at length a thick-headed Pennsylvania Lieutenant with two or three men went to see this famous old work, but no sooner were they well engaged in examining it, than a party of Indians, who were lying in the bushes attentive to their duty, fired and killed the Lieutenant and wounded two or three of the men; but not so badly but what they were able to effect their escape. The Lieutenant was scalped—and I thought he deserved it. On this occasion a man's religion saved his life—or rather a Psalm Book which was in his pocket, and which saved his side from being penetrated with a ball. This was a wonderful escape indeed—when I first heard of it, the idea of a man's having religion somewhere about him, even if it was in his pocket, struck me very forcibly.

Somewhere about the 26th or 28th of March a party consisting of three citizens came through from Detroit and informed us that General Proctor had issued a proclamation directing all the militia in the

vicinity of Malden, and upon the river Detroit to assemble at Sandwich on the 7th of April, for the purpose, it was well understood, of aiding in an expedition to be carried into effect against Camp Meigs. One of the persons, a man by the name of Bucknel, a respectable inhabitant of Detroit, stated that he had often been in company with Major Meur, and that while in his company had heard him describe the plan of attack that was to be pursued in case General Proctor went to the rapids, and the success of which enterprise he observed could not be doubted a moment. The principal plan of attack was as follows:—On arriving before the camp, the Indians were to be immediately thrown into our rear, or rather they were to invest the camp, and cut off at once all communication, while the troops were to be employed on the opposite side of the river in preparing the batteries and mounting the guns to cannonade and bombard the camp—and that in a very few hours after the batteries were opened upon the Americans, they would be compelled to seek safety by flying to the swamps, when the Indians would accomplish the rest. Major Meur's opinion was, that they should "*be able to smoke the Yankees out*," in the course of the first day's cannonade; but on this occasion, that gentleman certainly reckoned without his host.

A party of British officers had been down to the Rapids and reconnoitred our position, and from the situation they found it in, it is not at all surprising that such an opinion as Major Meur's should have been formed, and the plan they had formed was per-

haps as good a one as could have been fallen upon for the attack in the first instance, but it should have been abandoned and changed altogether so soon as it was discovered that we were beginning to entrench ourselves, entirely anew, within the original lines of the camp.

It was now the 1st of April, when all became perfectly convinced of the approaching storm, and that in the course of a very few days we might expect a portentous visit from his Excellency General Proctor, accompanied by the great Tecumseh, and both attended with a numerous retinue.

The Virginians left us on the 3d and 4th, and the Pennsylvanians had not yet made up their minds how many, or whether any, would volunteer to remain a week or two, or not. From the example just set them by the Virginians, nothing could be expected; however, another letter in the meantime was received by Brig.-General Crooks, from General Harrison, soliciting him to exert his influence to the utmost among the men, to get a part or the whole of his brigade to volunteer their services for a few days, until he could have time to arrive at the Rapids with a small party of regulars and militia, both of which were already on their march. But the woods were almost impassable, and it was not expected they could arrive before the 10th or 15th of the month, the very time that it was presumed the enemy would be engaged in carrying on the siege; which, were they permitted to commence before those re-enforcements arrived, all hopes of succor were cut off, and these troops must fall a prey to

the enemy on arrival in the vicinity of the camp. As already stated, about 150 of those patriotic militia from Pennsylvania were, with some diffculty, prevailed on to remain fifteen or twenty days longer. This conduct, when contrasted with that of the Virginia militia, was noble indeed.

On the 8th, Lieut.-Colonel Ball, with about 200 dragoons, arrived at the Rapids, and in fine time to afford assistance, which was very much wanted, in the completion of works. A short time afterwards General Harrison arrived with a small corps of regulars and militia.

The enemy did not make their appearance so soon as we had expected.

About the 20th the fifteen days' volunteers were paid off, highly complimented in general orders, and permitted to return home. The whole number of troops in camp at this time was about 1,200 or 1,300, of which not more than 850 were reported fit for duty. They were better than half regulars and volunteers, and the rest Kentucky and Ohio militia, who had just been drafted into service, and of course utterly ignorant of their duty. In the event of an attack, it was on this handful of undisciplined and inexperienced troops that General Harrison would have solely to rely for the defense of the camp, and the safety of the immense supplies of provisions and ordnance, both of which had been got to that place with great difficulty, and at an enormous expense. And it was now all but certain that the place would soon be invested, for we received information that the enemy were assembling in great

force at Sandwich, and that a large number of Indians had just arrived at Detroit from St. Joseph and the neighborhood of Mackinaw. Small parties of scattering Indians were constantly round the camp, whose object it seemed to be presumably to take prisoners, as we supposed, for the purpose of obtaining information relative to our strength and situation, and which, as we afterwards learned, was actually the case.

Our block-houses, batteries, magazines and connecting lines of defense were now generally completed; and the appearance of the camp, in every direction, was such as to inspire confidence in the minds of those whose duty it had become either to defend, or with it throw themselves into the hands of an English savage.

Fuel for the garrison, and timber to repair breaches and to make bombproofs should it be found necessary, were brought into camp in great abundance; and two or three wells were instantly commenced, and everything done that possibly could be to place the camp in the best situation to sustain a lengthy siege.

On the 25th a scouting party was sent down to Presque Isle, to see if any discoveries could be made of the approach of the enemy, which party returned in the afternoon of the same day, and reported that they saw several tents pitched upon the west side of the river, and two or three sail boats off the mouth of the bay. On the 26th, in the afternoon, a party of horsemen, consisting of about fifteen or twenty English officers and Indians, debouched from the

woods upon a small plain on the opposite side of the river, and galloped over it apparently with a design of examining its local position, and to select suitable sites for the placing of their batteries. Our guns were all instantly loaded; but before we could get ready to pay due honors to these new guests they thought proper to dispense with all ceremony on that occasion and to be off. The next morning sixty or eighty dragoons were despatched a short distance down the river to see what the enemy were about.

They had proceeded but a short distance before they met the Indians, who by their manoeuvering manifested a design of getting into the rear of the dragoons, which the intrepid Lieutenant who commanded the party did not altogether like so well; he therefore opposed a counter manoeuvre by bringing his men suddenly to the right about, and hastening expeditiously back to camp, where he arrived safe with only one man slightly wounded. This was certainly the best thing he could have done.

It afterwards appeared, that on the 25th the combined British and Indian forces consisting of 800 militia, 500 regulars, and 1,500 Indians, all under the command of Brig.-General Proctor, arrived at the mouth, and landed on the left shore of the Miami, and instantly threw a party of Indians across the river, to observe and watch the conduct of our troops, should any of them be sent out to reconnoitre, as was the constant practice. The next day the army was put in motion, keeping its left to the river, and arriving with the gunboats and batteries,

in which were the artillery and ordnance stores, and advanced gradually up until it arrived on the 27th at old Fort Miami, situated, as already described, two and a half miles below Camp Meigs, and near the foot of the rapids. The bateaux were immediately unloaded and employed in conveying the balance of the Indians to our side of the river. To-day the camp was completely invested, and on the following night the enemy broke ground in four different places, and were very industriously employed until morning, when their works were discovered to be in a tolerable state of forwardness. No sooner were these nocturnal works discovered, than orders were given for all our guns, that could be brought to bear, to open instantly upon them, which orders were executed with alacrity and promptitude; and those works of one night's growth, soon looked as if they had been but a moment's.

Understanding now perfectly the enemy's plan of attack, and where each of his principal batteries were going to be erected, and the particular object of each, and knowing that we should be greatly annoyed in our present state by his artillery, it became necessary to intrench the army entirely anew, which of course must be done within the original lines of the camp. A plan for a kind of intrenched citadel had been some time before arranged and recommended by Captain Wood of the engineers to General Harrison as the only effectual security for the army in case the enemy should attack with artillery, and which in a measure had been mentioned by him. It had not only met his approbation, but he

had on one or two occasions observed that he thought it had better be commenced and in a state of progression, that we might be the better prepared for the reception of the enemy in case he should come suddenly upon us. Orders were given for Captain Wood to commence the new intrenchments. On the 28th in the morning the whole army was set to work, and continued in the trenches until "tattoo"; when, on account of darkness and rain, a suspension of their labors until reveillé was recommended by the engineer to the General and readily approved of; the troops were accordingly dismissed with directions to the different commandants of parties to resume their stations in the trenches again at break of day, which orders were strictly complied with.

Orders had been previously given in the forepart of the day for the troops to continue at work all night in the trenches; but they had progressed most rapidly through the day, and the night being a very bad one, it was thought that more labor might be accomplished the next day by letting the men rest, than by keeping them all night at work.

Never did men behave better, on any similar occasion than did ours on this. The Indians had now become extremely troublesome; there was not a stump, bush, or log, within musket shot of the camp, but what shielded its man, and some of them two or three. Unfortunately, we had not been able to clear the wood away to a sufficient distance, on our left, of which circumstance those demons of the forest very readily availed themselves, and, instead

of remaining idle at the foot of the trees, they bounced into their tops, with as much agility and dexterity as if they had been taught it from their infancy; and from those elevated stations, poured down into our camp prodigious showers of musketry; but the distance being so great, out of the numerous quantity of balls received in camp, but very few took effect; many of the men, however, were wounded and rendered incapable of performing duty for some time. This ethereal annoyance from the Indians, certainly served as a source of great stimulus to the militia in camp, for notwithstanding their prompt obedience to orders and attention to duty, yet their movements were very much accelerated by it, as will always be found the case whenever musketry is brisk about their ears.

It is by no means astonishing that any kind of troops should act with energy and courage when situated as were those in Camp Meigs, one hundred miles distant from any settlement, in an impenetrable swamp the camp entirely surrounded with Indians, who filled it with musketry as thick as hail, no hope of relief, and the active preparations across the river for cannonading and bombarding the camp, all announcing the *necessity* for the most spirited and vigorous resistance.

After the first day's labor in the trenches, one-third of the troops only, were kept in them constantly, who were relieved every three hours by fresh ones. In this way we continued our operations, occasionally firing at the civilized savages across the river, as well as upon the wild ones in the woods,

whenever the former exposed themselves, *or the latter became too troublesome.*

The General was extremely active through the day, was everywhere to be seen in the trenches, urging on the works, as well by precept as example. He slept but little, and was uncommonly vigilant and watchful through the night.

The first thing commenced, to shield the troops against the annoyance of cannon, was a traverse, of about twenty feet base, laid parallel with the river, upon the most elevated ground, which was near the middle, and running the whole length of the camp; it was from ten to fifteen feet high, and completed early on the morning of the 1st of May. An avenue, as it were, had been opened through the tents and as many left standing on that side next the enemy as possible, to cover from his view our operations, until the traverse should be completed, and which seemed from his conduct to have answered the purpose extremely well.

This particular piece of work was completed early on the morning of the 1st of May, just as it was discovered that the enemy had finished three of his principal batteries, had got his guns in, was then loading and bringing them to battery; when orders were directly given for all the tents in front to be instantly struck and carried into the rear of the traverse. This was done in almost a moment, and that beautiful prospect of beating up our quarters, which but an instant before presented itself to the view of the eager and skilful artillerists, had now entirely fled, and in its place

suddenly appeared an immense shield of earth, obscuring from his sight every tent, every horse (of which there were 200) and every creature belonging to the camp. How disappointed must have been the indefatigable and skilful engineer on discovering the futility of all his works, and what a gloomy and hopeless prospect presented itself to the ardent and scientific artillerist!

Those canvas houses, which in a great measure had covered the growth of the traverse, by keeping from the view of the enemy the operations about it, were now with their inhabitants in them, entirely protected in their turn.

But as neither the general, engineer or artillerist were convinced of the *folly* and *futility* of their works, everything being ready, the batteries must be opened, and five days of arduous cannonading and bombarding were necessary to produce *a thorough conviction.* At 11 o'clock A. M. their batteries were therefore opened, and a most tremendous cannonading and bombardment was commenced and kept up, the former until dark, and the latter until 11 o'clock at night, when all was again silent. As we sustained but little injury through the day, having but one or two men killed, and five or six wounded, (the latter principally by the Indians) and our supply of ammunition being quite inadequate to the necessities of a lengthy siege, we fired very little during the day, contenting ourselves in safety and listening to the enemy's music. Some shells and a few rounds of grape were occasionally fired at the Indians, to drive them from their stations whenever

they approached too near the lines, which, in consequence of their teasing, were kept in almost a constant blaze with musketry. On the 2d, at dawn of day, the cannonade again commenced with great vigor, and the batteries continued to play with considerable briskness through the day, and with about the same effect as the preceding day. The position, however, of one of our magazines was discovered in the course of the day, and great hopes seemed to have been entertained by the enemy of effecting its destruction, the roof having been hit by a 24-pound shot; the whole of the batteries were instantly directed upon it, and the traverse not being of sufficient height to protect the roof, that part of it was pretty soon battered down, or rather blown off by a shell, which fell and exploded directly upon its loft, no damage of consequence, however, was done to it. As soon as the firing ceased in the evening, Captain Bradford (a most excellent officer) with a party of men, went to work, and before day had the magazine entirely repaired. Its loft had been covered with two tier of large timber, with plenty of raw hides placed between them, so as to prevent the fire from falling down into the magazine in case of shells lighting upon it; these timbers were hewn on two sides, and well spiked together. It had been apprehended that the enemy finding he could not effect his purpose by battering from the opposite side of the river, might take it into his head to establish batteries somewhere along our front, or on one or other of the flanks, and in order that we might be prepared to receive him at all points,

another traverse, parallel with the first, and distant about one hundred yards had been commenced—was soon finished, and the two connected by several short ones. This was done with a view to cut the space up so much that ricochet firing lengthways the camp should be attended with no injury while the men were in their tents.

Our intrenchments now, in a manner, formed a complete citadel, which could have been defended to great advantage, and would have been found extremely difficult to force had the enemy been able to have effected a passage at the first lines, which he never could have done without sustaining an immense loss.

On the 3d, at 10 o'clock A. M., our apprehensions respecting the enemy's crossing the river were completely realized, for it was now discovered by the fire of three or four pieces that he was already on our left, with his cannon stuck in the edge of a small ravine. From a few of the first shots some damage was sustained, but the best position had not yet been taken, and by setting two or three 18-pounders to work upon those impudent fellows in the "bush" we were soon able to silence them for a time. An attack from the left having been anticipated its consequences were, in a great measure, foreseen and guarded against. The person who was employed with the howitzer seemed a friend or possessed of very little skill in his profession, for notwithstanding he was but about three or four hundred yards distant from the camp, yet not more than one out of four or five shells thrown ever came inside the lines.

It was the opinion of many of our men that he certainly must be a friend, and felt for our situation. Be that as it may, he badly acquitted himself. In course of the third day we had two or three dragoons killed, several slightly touched, and a number of horses killed; in fact, it seemed to have been *particularly* an *unfortunate* day for the cavalry.

On the 4th, the enemy neither opened his batteries so early in the morning as he had been accustomed to do, nor did he fire them with his usual activity. The fire, though somewhat lively in the morning, grew less so through the day, until toward evening when it became quite dull; and everything about the batteries appeared as if the enemy were convinced that their labor was entirely lost, and that a farther prosecution of the attack from that side of the river would only be attended with an immense waste of powder and ball, and ultimately prove of no avail.

From excess of fatigue and almost constant watching in the trenches, through the night, our troops had become somewhat broken down, however their spirits were yet good, and a little refreshment, with a few hours rest, were only necessary to render them as effective as ever. The garrison frequently showed itself above the works, and occasionally gave three cheers, especially when the fire of the enemy was not brisk, and when it could be done with safety. It always occasioned a most hideous *yell* from the Indians. These rascals appeared to be greatly delighted at the bursting of the shells in our camp, and whenever great or material damage

was supposed to have been done by an explosion, they were sure to express their approbation by *yelping*.

At about 12 o'clock on the night of the 4th, Mr. Oliver, a young man who had been dispatched to meet General Clay, who was supposed to be somewhere on the Miami, returned and brought information that the General was then within about eight miles of the camp with 1,200 militia; and that he would be able in all probability, to reach Camp Meigs before day. Mr. Oliver left camp to meet General Clay on the 28th of April. General Harrison immediately formed a plan for having the enemy's batteries across the river stormed and the guns spiked. Captain Dudley was furnished with spikes, and directed to get out of camp as secretly as possible, to take a canoe, and make the best of his way up the river until he should meet with General Clay to whom he was to deliver the following instructions:—that he must land the whole or such part of his troops on the opposite side of the river early in the morning, as he might deem sufficient to storm and carry the enemy's batteries and to spike their guns; the bearer of the orders to act as a guide, and to conduct the storming columns to the batteries. The magazines were likewise to be destroyed, and the troops instantly to return to their boats, and recross the river to Camp Meigs. Captain Dudley reached General Clay in time to deliver his orders. Of the 1,200 men, 800 under the directions of Colonel Dudley (a man alike ignorant and rash, and who had never heard a hostile gun), were

ordered to land at dawn of day, to perform this gallant service.

The troops were formed into three columns and moved down to the attack, but they did not reach the batteries until about 9 o'clock in the morning. On coming within 300 or 400 yards of the works, his men set up a most tremendous yell (under an impression, I suppose, that a Kentucky yell was more to be dreaded than their arms), and pushed on without order or opposition and took possession of all the enemy's works, almost without firing a single gun, and without the loss of a single man. The few artillerists who were about the batteries, on hearing this tremendous yell, took the alarm, snatched the colors from their standards and flew with great precipitation to the main force below, which was at old Fort Miami—nor were they easily overtaken. Colonel Dudley now found himself in complete possession of the objects of his enterprise, and he had nothing further to do but to spike the guns blow up or destroy the magazines, and return with all possible celerity to his boats and cross the river before the enemy should have time allowed him to march the army up from Fort Miami, and attack him in return.

But, great God! neither knowing how to obey orders nor to profit by success, Colonel Dudley remained with his men upon the ground, gratifying a vain curiosity, without spiking but a part of the guns, and leaving the magazines entire, until the enemy had ample time to collect his forces, and return to repossess himself of his works, and chastise

in the severest manner the temerity, folly, ignorance and stupidity of this most unfortunate commander. Yes, it seemed as if those miserable creatures were only waiting upon the theatre of their success and glory, for the enemy to be fully prepared to take ample revenge.

These batteries were situated near the bank of the river, upon a small plain, with a wood in the rear, and entirely edged with thick bushes except in front; and the ground, on leaving the plain to go into the woods, was considerably intersected with small ravines, whose banks were entirely covered with under-mall brush. After remaining in groups upon this plain, in the most disorderly manner possible, for about thirty minutes, the Indians returned, and commenced a scattering fire from the edge of the bushes, which instantly drew the militia from the plain into the woods; in the meantime a column of British regulars were marched along up the river until they came upon the ground just left by Colonel Dudley, when they halted, formed in order of battle, and advanced to the attack of his rear. Thus situated between two fires, his troops in the greatest disorder, skirmishing with the Indians, in every direction, and possessing not the least knowledge of the local situation of the field of battle, what was to be expected, or what could be done by Colonel Dudley? No human means within the control of this unfortunate officer could save him, his fate was fixed, and the destruction of his corps inevitable. The contest was but short—a few minutes were sufficient to place this gallant corps of 800 Ken-

tuckians at the mercy of a most *cruel, savage* and *barbarous foe,* who only knew to conquer and slaughter. Of the 800 in this engagement, only about 100 were able to effect their retreat—80 or 90 of them got across the river to Camp Meigs, and the balance escaped to Fort Wayne, 60 or 70 were killed and the rest taken prisoners. Upwards of 600 were taken and marched under an escort of Indians to headquarters and confined in Old Fort Miami, with a strong chain of sentinels round the works. The Indians were then permitted by General Proctor to assemble upon the surrounding rampart, and there at their leisure, to amuse themselves by loading and firing at the crowd of prisoners, until at length, they preferred slaughtering those wretched mortals in a manner more suitable to their savage feelings; they therefore laid by their rifles, walked into the slaughter-pen, seized such persons as they pleased, and leading them to the gateway, there tomahawked and scalped them without mercy or restraint. Nine bodies were found lying in one pile, near the gate of the Fort, after General Proctor left the Miami. Many were found in other places tomahawked and scalped, and their bodies mangled in the most barbarous and inhuman manner. Colonel Dudley was found on the field of battle, scalped, his breast cut open, and his heart taken out! He fell a victim to his own indiscretion and folly—and shared the fate of many of his brave countrymen, who were less fortunate, in escaping death upon the field of battle, as a more horrid one awaited them at Fort Miami. Long will Kentucky have cause to re-

member the 5th day of May, as well as the 22d of January, no less memorable for the massacre at Raisin. Just as the unfortunate contest terminated on the other side of the river, another of much less importance took place upon our side and within a few hundred yards of the camp.

On attempting to land the balance of his men from the boats in which they had descended the Miami, General Clay met with considerable opposition from the Indians, who poured forth from the woods in great swarms, and seemed determined that not a single man should reach the camp. The Kentuckians, wishing to see the works and their friends in camp, obstinately persisted in pushing on, and a sharp fire soon ensued. Such guns as could be brought to bear upon the enemy, from the camp, were played with great briskness. Lieut.-Colonel Ball with 200 dragoons and one battalion of Infantry was sent to the assistance of General Clay, who by this time had been able to repulse the enemy, and to get within a short distance of the camp; being re-enforced, he drove the enemy quite into the woods, when orders were sent for the troops all to return to camp. In this affair he had fifteen or twenty killed, and one man taken prisoner; the enemy's loss was somewhat greater. General Clay's men had got into camp, and that alone was all the advantage we could boast of. In fact, I thought it rather unprofitable business, for the lives of fifty savages will not, in my opinion, compensate for the loss of one single brave soldier. Those guns which Colonel Dudley had failed to spike were played

upon the camp, and the rear of our troops, during their skirmish with the Indians, with great vehemence and considerable effect; this was truly perplexing and vexatious. That we should experience annoyance from these pieces, which but a few moments before were in the possession of our troops, and might so easily have been spiked and rendered useless to the enemy, seemed almost insupportable. In fact, it was but too just to say that Dudley's conduct merited almost any fate that could possibly befall him.

General Clay and Colonel Ball having got into camp with their wounded, General Harrison determined to try one other experiment with the enemy; he therefore ordered Colonel J. Miller of the 19th Regulars with 350 men to rally from two different places, and to storm those batteries which were erected upon our left, on the 3d of May. This officer, always ready to distinguish himself, formed his men and moved along the small ravine until he came near the enemy without being discovered, but on rising the bank within fifty or one hundred yards of the batteries he appeared in full view of twice or thrice his force. His men, however, were ordered to charge, which they did in the most gallant manner, and in a moment had possession of the batteries, and the guns were dismounted. The enemy were pursued some distance into the woods when orders were received for these brave fellows to return to camp, which they did, but suffered much from the Indians while returning to the lines; two lieutenants and forty-one privates, were the fruit of this affair.

Our loss was about thirty killed and three times that number wounded. Many reasons tend to confirm a belief that the enemy's loss in this affair was much greater than ours. Captains Croghan (now Colonel Croghan), Langham and Bradford, particularly distinguished themselves in this action (if such it may be called) as did several subalterns, among whom were Ensigns Shipp, Mitchell and Stockton. The company of volunteers from Petersburg (Virginia) particularly distinguished themselves by their intrepid and cool conduct while approaching the batteries under a heavy fire of musketry. Colonel Miller commanded his troops with conspicuous courage and gallantry, but being the only officer on horseback it was out of his power to see what occurred on the flanks and in the centre at the same time, or to get the requisite orders conveyed to those places, in consequence of which the Indians came very near turning his right and getting into his rear, which had they gained, being at that time very numerous, it is more than probable that the consequences would have been terrible indeed. Lieutenant Gwynne, then commanding a company on the right, fought his men man to man, for some time, and held the Indians in check until their manoeuvre was completely understood, and Colonel Miller had time to counteract it.

It was now about 12 or 1 o'clock when all the firing had ceased, and each looked as if he had received all the injury that the other could possibly do him. The Indians were seen passing constantly to and from Colonel Dudley's boats, which were a

short distance up the river, with immense loads of plunder. Flags were now passing between the two armies upon the subject of an exchange of prisoners, which ceremony the Indians soon availed themselves of by hoisting a white shirt or towel on a stick, and then prowling along before us with heavy loads of plunder, and in the most impudent manner.

In the course of the afternoon, General Proctor had the audacity to summon us to surrender the camp; he was very properly answered and told that if ever he got possession of Camp Meigs, it would be under such circumstances as to give him greater claims upon the gratitude of his country than he possibly could have by its being surrendered into his hands—or words to that effect.

The day was extremely wet and cold, and having no comfortable places for our sick and wounded, both seemed to suffer much. But everything was done for them that possibly could be, and no means were spared to make them as comfortable as the nature of their situation would admit. The wounded had hitherto been lying in the trenches, on rails barely sufficient to keep them up out of the water, which in many places, from the bleeding of the wounded, had the appearance of puddles of blood. These poor fellows were many times lying in that state without any other cover of shelter than that of the heavens.

It was now believed that General Proctor, contenting himself with the partial success he had met with, would soon raise the siege and return to

Malden; and without troubling us any more, on the morning of the 9th he accordingly left us. The prisoners which he took were carried down to Huron, and there landed.

Having many sick and wounded, as was naturally to be expected after a close siege of nine days (five days batteries open), and our force greatly impaired besides by the sorties from the right and left, on the 5th, it now became an object of the greatest importance to make such provisions, and to take such measures as might tend speedily to a restoration of health and vigor in the army. The block-houses about the lines were immediately cleared of the guns and stores and converted into temporary hospitals; tents were pitched with arbors about them, and such general arrangements were made to soften and alleviate their distresses as their situation and the nature of circumstances would admit. They, however, were but badly provided with the little necessaries and comforts which belong, and afford so much relief, to the brave soldier who has recently lost a leg or an arm, or had his side pierced with a bayonet while gallantly mounting the ramparts of his country's enemy.

There was no head to the Hospital Department, which was extremely deficient in almost every respect. Those to whom the important duties of that department had been committed were but a young, inexperienced set of men, with nothing but the title of Surgeon to recommend them, or to give them a claim to employment, and the principal part of whom had been picked up here and there among the militia,

wherever a person could be found with a lancet in his pocket, or who had by some means or other *obtained the title of doctor.* Such were the persons whose duty it became, to say whether the limb of a gallant officer or brave young soldier should be lopped off, or preserved. There had previously been a man of skill and talents at the head of the Hospital Department, but one alike destitute of honor and reputation, and whose departure from the army was followed with disgrace. What was to be expected from that department, thus managed and most wretchedly supplied? What prospects of recovery had the wounded; dying for a gill of gin or a spoonful of vinegar? Neither were to be had! Not a particle of vegetables, nor a pound of fresh meat; and one hundred miles from any inhabitants; not more than one-third of the army fit for duty, and that third to perform all the ordinary duties of the camp; to make many considerable repairs in the lines (for we knew not how soon the enemy might return) and to give the required and necessary attendance on the sick; in short, so much exhausted and so low were the spirits of those who were reported for duty, that for a number of days it was painful for an officer to be under the necessity of putting his men upon the slightest service. The camp exhibited a very melancholy spectacle for some time. The success of having defeated the enemy, and disappointed his best expectations, was nothing when contrasted with the sufferings and hardships which they had to undergo. It was by no means astonishing that the troops should be generally

gloomy and low spirited, when we come to consider that they were principally men of family and who were on a tour of duty only for a few days; that many were already dead, others dying constantly; and that the shocking disaster of Dudley's defeat of the 5th was still fresh upon their recollections.

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We regret that the remainder of this most interesting narrative of the Campaign of 1813 in the Northwest, by one of its distinguished participants, is not to be found. It was doubtless loaned and not returned; hence, probably, we shall never read Wood's graphic account of Proctor's second expedition up the Maumee to attack Fort Meigs, and the inglorious defeat, by the gallant Croghan, of the baffled British savage, at Fort Stephenson. These events, however, we have described in our sketch of the Western Campaign of 1813, in the third chapter.

Fortunately, in an old note book found in Wood's pocket, when he was killed at Fort Erie, we have found the following entries relating to Harrison's invasion of Canada which describe the operations up to the battle of the Thames, an account of which action we have before fully given:

CAMP ON THE PENINSULA,
September 11, 1813.

I received orders on the 9th inst., to repair to Lower Sandusky—there to assume the immediate command of two companies of artillery, commanded by Captains Price and Thomas, the latter Pennsylvania drafted troops, and to embark them with all

or such part of the ordnance as I might deem most proper.

In pursuance of said orders, I went to Sandusky, made the necessary arrangements, and on the 12th at 8 o'clock A. M., my detachment, consisting of 130 men with eleven pieces of ordnance, were all on board the boats. The day was fine—we set sail with a fair wind and delightful music; and just at night landed on the south side of the Peninsula and near the mouth of Sandusky River.

This river is generally from 60 to 80 yards wide, and is navigable for bateaux as high up as Sandusky, or Fort Stephenson—a place rendered memorable on account of the gallant defense which Major Croghan made, on the 2d of August, 1813, against the combined attack of English and Indians.

The banks along the Sandusky River are generally very low, and edged with a beautiful border of wild grass—especially towards its mouth, where it seems entirely to waste itself in a large prairie and is again collected in the spacious Bay below. It is 18 miles from Sandusky to the mouth of the river and the same distance from thence to the mouth of the Bay. The land along the river, from Sandusky down, and the Peninsula, is extremely rich and fertile. Bull Island which lies at the mouth of the Bay, is a perfect garden spot.

Early on the morning of the 12th, I mounted my horse, took Captain Holmes and two spies, and went to the mouth of Portage River, a distance of two miles; on arriving there, I met with Captain

Stockton of the infantry just from the fleet, with dispatches for General Harrison, which contained an account of the glorious victory which our Navy gained over the enemy on Lake Erie on the 10th inst., and requesting assistance in landing and securing the prisoners.

I instantly returned to camp, mounted Captain C., and gave him a guide and he went on to headquarters. I wrote the following letter, and sent it by him to the General:

CAMP ON THE PENINSULA,
September 12, 1813.

DEAR SIR:

With my detachment and eleven pieces of ordnance I have encamped on the south side of the Peninsula, near the mouth of Sandusky Run.

I am informed by Captain Stockton that Commodore Perry is in great want of aid, having many prisoners aboard the fleet, and his crews very much exhausted. In consequence of which information I have thought proper to despatch Captain Price with a detachment of fifty men to his assistance.

I have laid out an excellent road to the mouth of Portage River, and find at that place a delightful situation to encamp our troops.

I am, etc.,

E. D. WOOD,

Major of Engineers, Commanding Detachment of Artillery.

MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM H. HARRISON,
Commanding the N. W. Army.

CAMP ON THE PENINSULA,
September 12, 1813.

DEAR SIR:

I am informed by Captain Stockton, who has just left this for the headquarters of the N. W. Army, that you have a large number of prisoners on board the fleet; that your crews are quite exhausted, and that you are in want of aid. I therefore have thought proper to despatch Captain Price with a detachment of fifty men to your assistance. Should you see fit to send any prisoners ashore, I shall have it in my power to secure as many as Captain Price's detachment will be able to bring.

Permit me to congratulate you, sir, on the splendid victory you have achieved over the enemy on Lake Erie.

I have the honor to be, with high consideration and esteem, sir, your obedient servant,

E. D. WOOD,
Major Commanding Detachment of Artillery.

COMMODORE PERRY,
Commanding the American Fleet on Lake Erie.

On the 13th of September I marched a detachment of 100 men to the mouth of Portage River, and in the course of the same day, got all my ordnance across the Peninsula to that place, which I had selected as the most eligible situation as well for the encampment as for the embarkation of our whole army. General Harrison, like a flash of lightning, to my utter astonishment, arrived there the same evening—as did also Colonel Paul with his regiment.

The next day we fired several signal guns for the

fleet to come in, that the prisoners might be brought ashore. At about 9 o'clock in the morning, seeing nothing of the fleet, I climbed into the top of a tall tree, from which with my glass, I was able to discover four vessels just getting under way near Put-in-Bay, and standing in for the shore. They arrived off the mouth of Portage at 4 P.M., and immediately began landing their prisoners. That night and the next day about 300 and upwards were landed and put under a strong guard.

I was requested by the General to take some of the officers to my quarters, which I did—notwithstanding I had a very great aversion to Englishmen, and wished to meet them no where but on the field.

Two Lieutenants, brothers, by the name of Garden lived with me until the morning of the 18th, when I received orders from the Adjutant General to embark my corps together with the ordnance, and proceed to Put-in-Bay and there land on one of the islands. *These were very pleasing orders to me for I always like to be ahead of the main Army, and to tarry but a very short time in any one place.* Colonel Paul received orders at the same time. We embarked our corps—and under the immediate directions of General Cass, we proceeded to Put-in-Bay and landed late in the afternoon on Edward's Island. The wind breezing up late in the day and some of my bateaux being loaded, it was with some difficulty they were able to get in. Only one, commanded by a *timid old maid*, put back, and did not arrive for one or two days afterwards.

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September 20th. 1,500 troops arrived on Edward's Island from camp No. 2, at the mouth of Portage River, since yesterday morning. The Army in fine health and spirits; the weather extremely pleasant and favorable to our operations.

September 24, 1813. This morning at 9 o'clock the troops began to embark on board the vessels, and to move on to the Westernmost Sister. General Harrison embarked, but in consequence of bad weather and adverse winds, after going out a short distance, returned with the transports, and landed.

4 o'clock P.M. Just received orders to hold my command in readiness to embark to-morrow morning at 3 o'clock—all ready and have been so since 8 o'clock this morning.

September 25th. To-day the army left Put-in-Bay and went to the Middle Sister, a small island situated in the Lake, and about 18 miles from Malden. That night after we arrived on the island, General Harrison, Commodore Perry, the General Staff and myself went on board a pilot boat, for the purpose of going on a reconnoitring trip to Malden. The wind being fair, at break of day we got under way, and run up to Malden—or within a very short distance of Amherstburgh, took soundings and examined the coast for three or four miles below the town. We discovered that Malden and all the public buildings had been burnt. Its ruins were yet smoking. We returned to the island—spent the night there and early the next morning the army was embarked for the invasion of Canada. The wind was fair and the day extremely beautiful. Our

large vessels and from 80 to 90 bateaux all started at the same time, and exhibited one of the grandest scenes, almost, that my eyes ever beheld. The day was important and interesting to every one in the army which consisted of about 4,500 Kentucky militia and 2,500 regulars.

On this occasion, I commanded a battalion of artillery—all belonging to the N. W. Army—and crossed the lake with six pieces mounted in bateaux —one gun in each—loaded and matches lighted —so that I could have fought as well by sea as land.

At three in the afternoon of the same day, we landed three miles below Amherstburgh, without opposition—the same night marched up to Fort Malden, and encamped, where we remained till the next morning, when we commenced our march and proceeded about half way to Sandwich.

On the 29th, the army arrived at Sandwich where it remained until the 3d of October.

General Proctor, after burning Malden and all the public buildings in Amherstburgh, had retreated to Sandwich, where he remained till our army was in possession of the ruins of Malden, when he again took up his line of march for the River Detroit.

The Indians were very numerous on our approach to Detroit, but soon left the village on seeing our vessels and troops moving up the River St. Clair.

The country along both sides of this river is one of the most interesting and beautiful that I have ever met with in any part of the United States. Immediately on its banks the land is fertile, and in

a high state of cultivation. The inhabitants on the English shore are principally Canadians or French.

Detroit is a perfect paradise, but many of its beauties have been defaced and tarnished by the ruthless hand of the savage.

October 2d.—To-day the army commences its march in pursuit of General Proctor.

October 16, 1813.—On the 2d inst., the army left Sandwich in pursuit of Proctor, and at night encamped within six miles of the River Thames. Early the next morning we commenced our march, and at about 10 o'clock A. M. we took a Lieutenant of dragoons and sixteen privates, who were employed in cutting down a bridge; this indication of our approach to Proctor stimulated the army extremely, and we marched that day nearly thirty miles, and encamped at John Pike's, on the Thames. The enemy were so hard pressed the next day that they were compelled to set fire to two gun-boats which were heavily laden with ordnance and other stores, and consumed the whole. At Bowler they also burnt vast supplies of munitions of war, and property of almost every description to a very considerable amount. Our army arrived there sufficiently early to save from the flames a considerable quantity of fixed ammunition and a few barrels of pork. Every few miles we heard of the enemy, and our spies were very frequently in contact with his rear guard. On the 5th, in the morning early, we came up and took one Sergeant and fourteen privates in a boat; shortly after the spies took a

Captain Crowther, his family, and about forty or fifty privates.

In crossing the right branch of the Thames, at the forks yesterday, we had quite a brush with the Indians. The enemy had gone over, taken up the plank of the bridge, and left the Indians to oppose our crossing, while the English army continued its *slow and easy retreat.*

So soon as we came to the bridge the Indians commenced firing on our men. I was immediately directed to bring up the artillery and cannonade the enemy, as well across the branch as over the main stream, where was posted in a small house a party of Indians and English for the purpose of annoying our troops while crossing the river. I set two 6-pounders to work upon them and they soon cleared out, and went off in great haste. We repaired the bridge as quickly as possible, and the whole army was soon over and in pursuit of John Bull.

THE END.

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